

DEUTERONOMY 20

Deuteronomy 20:1–20

Guidelines for Warfare

These studies are designed for believers in Jesus Christ only. If you have exercised faith in Christ, then you are in the right place. If you have not, then you need to heed the words of our Lord, Who said, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son, so that every [one] believing [or, trusting] in Him shall not perish, but shall be have eternal life! For God did not send His Son into the world so that He should judge the world, but so that the world shall be saved through Him. The one believing [or, trusting] in Him is not judged, but the one not believing has already been judged, because he has not believed in the Name of the only-begotten [or, uniquely-born] Son of God.” (John 3:16–18). “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life! No one comes to the Father except through [or, by means of] Me!” (John 14:6).

Every study of the Word of God ought to be preceded by a naming of your sins to God. This restores you to fellowship with God (1John 1:8–10). If there are people around, you would name these sins silently. If there is no one around, then it does not matter if you name them silently or whether you speak aloud.

Sometime ago, I did a verse-by-verse exegesis of the books of the Pentateuch, and, in my opinion, did not really give these books the full treatment that they deserved. Here, I am going back and redoing the book of Deuteronomy. All of the information from that previous study will be included in here and this study will eventually supplant the shorter study of the book of **Deuteronomy** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)). From time to time, there will be concepts and exegetical material which will be repeated, because I do not always do a good job in the end editing this material.

Links to the completed chapters of Deuteronomy are found here ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)). This chapter is a part of that study.

One more thing: **it is not necessary that you read the grey Hebrew exegesis tables**. They are set apart from the rest of the study so that you can easily skip over them.¹ However, if you ever doubt a translation of a phrase or a verse, these translation tables will tell you exactly where that translation came from.

This should be the most extensive examination of Deut. 20 available, where you will be able to examine in depth every word of the original text.

Outline of Chapter 20:

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vv.	5–8	Military Exemptions
v.	9	A Strategy Meeting of Military Authorities
vv.	10–11	Israel is to First Offer Terms of Peace
vv.	12–14	The Spoils of War

¹ This was done as a result of the complaints of a close friend, now face to face with the Lord, who said that I intermingled the Hebrew and the explanation so much that he did not like it. Therefore, all of the Hebrew exegesis is visually set apart and may be easily skipped over.

- vv. 15–18 [Procedures for Attacking the Heathen in the Land of Promise](#)
- vv. 19–20 [The Preservation of Natural Resources in Wartime](#)

[Addendum](#)

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines:

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- [Introduction](#) [The Principals of Deuteronomy 20](#)
- [Introduction](#) [A Synopsis of Deuteronomy 20](#)
- [Introduction](#) [Matthew Henry Summarizes Deuteronomy 20](#)

- v. 4 [Deuteronomy 20:2–4 \(graphic\)](#)
- v. 5 [Deuteronomy 20:5 \(graphic\)](#)
- v. 6 [Deuteronomy 20:6 \(graphic\)](#)
- v. 10 [God Offers Us Peace, Just as Israel Was to Offer Terms of Peace](#)
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- v. 16 [The Bible and Genocide](#)
- v. 16 [Statue of Moloch \(graphic\)](#)
- v. 17 [What is a Righteous War?](#)
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- [Addendum](#) [What We Learn from Deuteronomy 20](#)
- [Addendum](#) [Josephus' History of this Time Period](#)
- [Addendum](#) [A Complete Translation of Deuteronomy 20](#)
- [Addendum](#) [Word Cloud from a Reasonably Literal Paraphrase of Deuteronomy 20](#)
- [Addendum](#) [Word Cloud from Exegesis of Deuteronomy 20](#)

Chapter Outline		Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines	
Forward	Doctrines Covered and Alluded to	Chapters of the Bible Alluded To	
Psalms Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter	Other Chapters of the Bible Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter	Definition of Terms	
Introduction	Text	Addendum	
www.kukis.org		Exegetical Studies in Deuteronomy	

Doctrines Covered	Doctrines Alluded To		
			Military
			War

Chapters of the Bible Alluded To

Joshua 9	Judges 1	2Sam. 8	
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Psalms Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter			
	Psalm 30	Psalm 106	

Other Chapters of the Bible Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter			

Many who read and study this chapter are 1st or 2nd generation students of R. B. Thieme, Jr., so that much of this vocabulary is second nature. One of Bob's contributions to theology is a fresh vocabulary along with a number of concepts which are theologically new or reworked, yet still orthodox. Therefore, if you are unfamiliar with his work, the definitions below will help you to fully understand all that is being said. In addition to this, I will use a number of other more traditional technical theological terms which will be used and therefore defined as well.

Definition of Terms	
Angelic Conflict	Before man was created, God had created angels, and some of these angels sinned against God. This conflict, which we cannot see, is a conflict that we are a part of, and our spiritual lives in particular are directly to the Angelic Conflict.
Client Nation	Client-Nation, is a national entity in which a certain number of spiritually mature Christians (the salt of the earth) have formed a pivot sufficient to sustain the nation and through which God specifically protects this nation so that believers can fulfill the divine mandates of evangelism, communication and custodianship of Bible doctrine, providing a haven for Jews, and sending missionaries abroad. The United States is a client-nation to God. A client nation must have freedom: Freedom to seek God, freedom to use one's own volition and self-determination to succeed or fail, freedom from anarchy and tyranny, freedom for evangelism, freedom for believers to hear Bible teaching without government interference and, therefore, to grow spiritually, and freedom to send missionaries to other nations.
Divine Good	The good that the believer creates when he is filled with God the Holy Spirit. This is not a reference to holy roller emotionalism.
Cycles of Discipline (Stage of National Discipline)	A national entity which is a client nation to God is under both God's protection and His discipline (much like the individual believer). As a nation moves further and further from God, God may impose disciplinary measures on that nation, which include economic disaster, illness, civil unrest, military defeat, and even invasion which may include a slavery or dispersion of the people. These cycles are found in Lev. 26. Although these warnings are designed for Israel, all client nations to God may face similar downward historical trends.
Fifth Cycle of Discipline (the 5th Stage of National Discipline)	The fifth cycle of discipline involves complete loss of personal and national sovereignty, the destruction of the family and the nation. Offerings to God are unacceptable. Nations which have undergone this destruction have experienced slavery, cannibalism, and the assimilation of its surviving citizens into other cultures.
Personal Sense of Destiny	A person so in tune with the will of God (by means of knowledge of doctrine), that they understand their reason for being alive and they execute the plan of God almost as if God were whispering into their ear what to do (God does not whisper into anyone's ears today).

Definition of Terms

Rebound (Restoration to fellowship with God)

In the New Testament, this is naming your sins to God, so that you are both restored to temporal fellowship with God and are then filled with the Spirit of God. In the Old Testament, naming your sins to God would result in a restoration of fellowship and, in some cases, the empowerment of the Holy Spirit once again (the Holy Spirit was not given to all Old Testament believers).

Some of these definitions are taken from

http://gracebiblechurchwichita.org/?page_id=1556
<http://www.bibledoctrinechurch.org/?subpages/GLOSSARY.shtml>
<http://rickhughesministries.org/content/Biblical-Terms.pdf>
<http://www.gbible.org/index.php?proc=d4d>
<http://www.wordoftruthministries.org/termsanddefs.htm>
<http://www.realtime.net/~wdoud/topics.html>
<http://www.theopedia.com/>

An Introduction to Deuteronomy 20

Introduction: Deut. 20 is one of the more cohesive chapters of Deuteronomy. It deals with all of the many aspects of war: fear, conscription, when a person is exempt from military service, and specific instructions given to Israel concerning specific groups of people. It is possible that there is a portion of Deut. 21 which belongs in this chapter.

Most people who have studied the words of our founders believe that the framers of our constitution were very knowledgeable of the Scriptures. Since roughly 97% of the people who came to America would be classified today as Protestants, this would make sense. Therefore, they put together a document which has stood a great test of time, and a government which has functioned under the concept of checks and balances, with the intention that one branch of the government not become too powerful. However, since those days, the average politician today has no concept of God's Word and no framework for a true absolute standard of what is right and wrong. Therefore, much of the legislation which is passed, although intended as well-meaning at times, ends up being self-serving and it creates many more problems than it ever solves.

Conscription (the draft) is a problem that we have dealt with for decades—who should serve in the armed forces and for how long. Deuteronomy is a very practical book and will give us insight into the correct way to run an army.

In my personal study of God's Word, one of the highlights is reading what J. Vernon McGee has to say on a given chapter or verse. He had the ability to communicate like few others: *We see little mottos which read, "Make love, not war." That may sound good, but like so many little mottos, it is absolutely meaningless. Because we are living in a sinful world where the heart of man is desperately wicked, there are times to make war. There are times when we need to protect ourselves. There are wars in which God is on one side. Frankly, the important question any nation should consider—and certainly a so-called civilized and Christian nation—is whether this is a war that God is in. If He isn't in it, then we shouldn't be in it either.*²

Like all the Old Testament chapters of the Bible I have studied, there is a great deal from this chapter which can be applied to the life of the believer today.

² J. Vernon McGee, *Deuteronomy*, pp. 125–126.

It is important to understand what has gone before.

The Prequel of Deuteronomy 20

Moses led two groups of Jews out of Egypt—adult slaves and their children (age 20 and below). Although these people, after being led out of Egypt and seeing many signs and miracles, they still rejected God’s provision and God’s direction. God told them to go into the land from the south and take it, and they refused, being afraid of the *giants in the land*.

As a result of their negative volition toward God’s orders, God took them further away from the Land of Promise, and they cooled their heels in the desert area between Israel and Egypt for the next 38½ years. During this time, all of the adults—Gen X—died the sin unto death (Moses, Joshua and Caleb being the notable exceptions); and their children—the Generation of Promise—came of age while living out in the desert.

Moses was going to lead these young men from the desert into the land of Canaan, except that he made a terrible mistake at the very end, striking a rock in order to get water, when God told him to merely speak to the rock (this destroyed the concept of type and antitype—Moses was to strike one rock one time, and that would produce the living waters for the children of Israel—Ex. 17). Instead, Moses, upset with the people, struck a second rock for water (Num. 20). For that reason—because he disobey God and thereby confused a type—Moses was unable to bring the children of Israel into the Land of Promise.

Most of the book of Deuteronomy is a set of sermons delivered by Moses to the children of Israel before they cross over into the Land of Promise.

What is really remarkable with the book of Deuteronomy is, in Exodus through Numbers, Moses is very careful to distinguish between God speaking and him speaking. That is, Moses wanted it to be very clear when God was laying down the law as over against when Moses was giving some historical narrative.

However, when we come to the book of Deuteronomy, Moses speaks to the people of Israel with divine authority. That is, the laws, code, and regulations found in the book of Deuteronomy are presented with the same authority as the laws given directly from God.

This prequel is almost identical throughout the book of Deuteronomy.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

We need to know who the people are who populate this chapter.

The Principals of Deuteronomy 20

Characters	Commentary
Moses	This is a part of several sermon which Moses gave to the people of Israel. These are the last sermons of Moses, as he will not travel over into Canaan with his people.
Generation of promise	After 40 years, the adults who left Egypt under the command of Moses have all died the sin unto death (I have named them <i>Gen X</i>). The only ones who remain are their children, who are now adults and are ready to enter into the Land of Promise (Canaan).
The priest	A priest will be called in before battle to speak to the people to give them spiritual encouragement.
The officers	These men will speak to the people and eliminate those who should not go to war.

The latter two categories will be brought in before a battle. This does not refer to a specific priest or officer.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Here is what to expect in Deuteronomy 20:

A Synopsis of Deuteronomy 20

Moses is speaking to the children of Israel. They are about to go west, over the Jordan River, to take the land of promise. He will remain on the east side to die a natural death.

Moses primarily speaks about the military. First, he tells the people not to be worried if they go to meet a well-equipped, larger army in battle. The priest are to tell the people that God is with them; and that this is the same God Who led them out of Egypt. Deut. 20:1–4

Then Moses gives those who are exempt from going into battle: anyone who has built a new house, planted a new vineyard, or is almost married, but the marriage has not yet been consummated. Also, if a person is afraid, he may return home as well. Deut. 20:5–8.

After these preliminary talks, there will be an organization of the authorities over the army and their divisions and companies. Deut. 20:9

When approach a city to go to war against them, the Jews must first offer them terms of peace. If they accept these terms, the people of that city become their slaves. If not, they are to kill every male in the city and then take all of the women, children and livestock as their prey, to be enslaved. Deut. 20:10–15

Some suggest that Deut. 21:10–14 belongs right here, where a soldier sees a woman out from the female captives whom he greatly desires. Deut. 21:10–14

The procedure of offering terms of peace are not to be followed by the Jews when it comes to the cities within the land of promise. Those people are to be destroyed, as per God's instructions. Deut. 20:16–18

Finally, when besieging a city that the Jews plan to occupy, they are not to destroy the fruit trees around the city, as these will provide them with food when they occupy the city. Deut. 20:19–20

Like all chapters of the Word of God, you need more than just the simple plot outline to understand what God wants us to know.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

I always like to include a different source when it comes to the summary of a chapter:

Matthew Henry Summarizes Deuteronomy 20

This chapter settles the militia, and establishes the laws and ordinances of war,

- I. Relating to the soldiers.
 1. Those must be encouraged that were drawn up to battle (Deut. 20:1–4).
 2. Those must be dismissed and sent back again whose private affairs called for their attendance at home (Deut. 20:5–7), or whose weakness and timidity unfitted them for service in the field (Deut. 20:8, Deut. 20:9).
- II. Relating to the enemies they made war with.
 1. The treaties they must make with the cities that were far off (Deut. 20:10–15).
 2. The destruction they must make of the people into whose land they were going (Deut. 20:16–18).
 3. The care they must take, in besieging cities, not to destroy the fruit-trees (Deut. 20:19,

Matthew Henry Summarizes Deuteronomy 20

Deut. 20:20).

From Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Deut. 20 chapter comments.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Keil and Delitzsch call this chapter: *Instructions for Future Wars – Deuteronomy 20*. *The instructions in this chapter have reference to the wars which Israel might wage in future against non-Canaanitish nations (Deut. 20:15.), and enjoin it as a duty upon the people of God to spare as much as possible the lives of their own soldiers and also of their enemies. All wars against their enemies, even though they were superior to them in resources, were to be entered upon by them without fear in reliance upon the might of their God; and they were therefore to exempt from military service not only those who had just entered into new social relations, and had not enjoyed the pleasures of them, but also the timid and fainthearted (Deut. 20:1–9). Moreover, whenever they besieged hostile towns, they were to offer peace to their enemies, excepting only the Canaanites; and even if it were not accepted, they were to let the defenceless (viz., women and children) live, and not to destroy the fruit-trees before the fortifications (Deut. 20:10–20).*³

There are two facts which you should hold in the back of your mind, as we go through this and other chapters of Deuteronomy: (1) Moses was prepared for this job in many ways, including the study of law in Egypt and (2) this younger generation standing before Moses does not know what the real world is like, and their parents are dead, having died the sin unto death, so they must be taught by Moses both spiritual information and practical information.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Encouragement Before Going to War

As before. Moses is speaking to the people of Israel, to the generation of promise. Many translations begin this as a quotation, because this is a quotation. However, apart from the first chapter, I have decided to leave the quotation marks indicating Moses speaking off. I will probably include them, however, in the final chapter of his speaking as well.

Kukis slavishly literal:

When you go forth to war against your enemies and you have seen a horse and a rider—a people great more than you—you will not fear from them for Y^ehowah your Elohim [is] with you—the One bringing you up out of a land of Egypt.

Deuteronomy
20:1

Kukis moderately literal:

When you go forth to war against your enemies and you see horses and chariots—a people greater than you—you will not fear them for Y^ehowah your Elohim [is always] with you—[He is] the One Who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.

Kukis not so literal:

When you go out to war against your enemies, and you see their horses and chariots, and you see that they have an army much greater than yours—do not fear them because Jehovah your God is always with you—even in war. He brought you up out of the land of Egypt.

³ Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Deut. 20 chapter comments.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Note: I compare the Hebrew text to English translations of the Latin, Syriac and Greek texts, using the Douay-Rheims translation⁴; George Lamsa's translation, and Sir Lancelot Charles Lee Brenton's translation as revised and edited by Paul W. Esposito, respectively. I often update these texts with non-substantive changes (e.g., *you* for *thou*, etc.). I often use the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible instead of Brenton's translation, because it updates the English text.

The Septuagint was the earliest known translation of a book (circa 200 B.C.). Since this translation was made before the textual criticism had been developed into a science and because different books appear to be translated by different men, the Greek translation can sometimes be very uneven.

When there are serious disparities between my translation and Brenton's (or the text of the Complete Apostles' Bible), I look at the Greek text of the Septuagint (the LXX) to see if a substantive difference actually exists (and I reflect these changes in the English rendering of the Greek text). I use the Greek LXX with Strong's numbers and morphology available for e-sword. The only problem with this resource (which is a problem for similar resources) is, there is no way to further explore Greek verbs which are not found in the New Testament. Although I usually quote the Complete Apostles' Bible here, I have begun to make changes in the translation when their translation conflicts with the Greek and note what those changes are.

The Masoretic text is the Hebrew text with all of the vowels (vowel points) inserted (the original Hebrew text lacked vowels). We take the Masoretic text to be the text closest to the original. However, differences between the Masoretic text and the Greek, Latin and Syriac are worth noting and, once in a great while, represent a more accurate text possessed by those other ancient translators.

In general, the Latin text is an outstanding translation from the Hebrew text into Latin and very trustworthy (I say this as a non-Catholic). Unfortunately, I do not read Latin—apart from some very obvious words—so I am dependent upon the English translation of the Latin (principally, the Douay-Rheims translation).

Underlined words indicate differences in the text.

Bracketed portions of the Dead Sea Scrolls are words, letters and phrases lost in the scroll due to various types of damage. Underlined words or phrases are those in the Dead Sea Scrolls but not in the Masoretic text.

The Targum of Onkelos is actually the Pentateuchal Targumim, which are The Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan Ben Uzziel. On the Pentateuch With The Fragments of the Jerusalem Targum From the Chaldee by J. W. Etheridge, M.A. Taken from <http://targum.info/targumic-texts/pentateuchal-targumim/> and first published in 1862.

Ancient texts:

Targum (trans. By Cook)

When you go forth to battle against your enemies, and see horses and chariots, and peoples proud, overbearing, and stronger than you, fear them not; for all of them

⁴ I have begun to doubt my e-sword Douay-Rheims version, so I now use www.latinvulgate.com.

Latin Vulgate	are accounted as a single horse and a single chariot before the Lord your God, whose Word will be your Helper; <u>for</u> He brought you free out of the land of Mizraim. If you go out to war against your enemies, and see <u>horsemen</u> and <u>chariots</u> , and the numbers of the enemy's army greater than your, you will not fear them: because the Lord your God is with you, who brought you out of the land of Egypt.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	When you go forth to war against your enemies and you have seen a horse and a rider—a people great more than you—you will not fear from them for Y ^e howah your Elohim [is] with you—the One bringing you up out of a land of Egypt.
Peshitta (Syriac)	WHEN you go out to battle against your enemies, and see <u>horses</u> and <u>chariots</u> and a people more than you, you shall not be afraid of them; for the LORD your God is with you, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.
Septuagint (Greek)	And if you should go forth to war against your enemies, and should see a horse and rider, and a people more numerous than yourself; you shall not be afraid of them, for the Lord your God is with you, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.
Significant differences:	In the Hebrew, <i>horse</i> and <i>chariot</i> are both in the singular; however, these can be used as collective nouns.

The targum has a few extra words, as usual.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Rules for warfare When you march out to battle your enemies and you see horses, chariots, and a fighting force larger than yours, don't be afraid of them, because the Lord your God, the one who brought you up from Egypt, is with you.
Contemporary English V.	If you have to go to war, you may find yourselves facing an enemy army that is bigger than yours and that has horses and chariots. But don't be afraid! The LORD your God rescued you from Egypt, and he will help you fight.
Easy English	Special rules for war Do not be afraid when you go out to fight against your enemies. You may meet larger armies with more horses than you have. Do not be afraid! The *Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, will be with you.
Good News Bible (TEV)	"When you go out to fight against your enemies and you see chariots and horses and an army that outnumbers yours, do not be afraid of them. The LORD your God, who rescued you from Egypt, will be with you.
<i>The Message</i>	When you go to war against your enemy and see horses and chariots and soldiers far outnumbering you, do not recoil in fear of them; GOD, your God, who brought you up out of Egypt is with you.
New Century Version	Laws for War When you go to war against your enemies and you see horses and chariots and an army that is bigger than yours, don't be afraid of them. The Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, will be with you.
New Life Version	"When you go to battle against those who hate you and see more horses and war-wagons and soldiers than you have, do not be afraid of them. For the Lord your God, Who brought you from the land of Egypt, is with you.
New Living Translation	Regulations concerning War "When you go out to fight your enemies and you face horses and chariots and an army greater than your own, do not be afraid. The Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, is with you!
The Voice	Moses: <i>This is how you should act during wartime:</i> When you go to battle against your enemies, if you see their army is larger than yours and they have horses and chariots, don't be afraid of them! The Eternal your God is with you—the same God who <i>defeated Pharaoh and</i> brought you out of Egypt.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	'And when you go to war against your enemies and find that they have a larger army and more horsemen than you do; don't be afraid of them, for Jehovah your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt is with you!
Beck's American Translation	<i>When There's a War</i> "When you go out to fight against your enemies and see horses and chariots, a bigger army than yours, don't be afraid of them, because the LORD your God who brought you out of Egypt is with you.
Christian Community Bible	War When you go to war against your enemies and you see horses, chariots and an army more numerous than yours, then have no fear because Yahweh, your God, who brought you out of Egypt, is with you.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	When thou dost go out to war against thy enemies, never be daunted by the sight of horsemen and chariots, and a host greater than thy own arrayed against thee; the Lord thy God, who rescued thee from Egypt, fights on thy side.
New American Bible (R.E.)	<i>Courage in War.</i> When you go out to war against your enemies and you see horses and chariots and an army greater than your own, you shall not be afraid of them, for the LORD, your God, who brought you up from the land of Egypt, will be with you.
NIRV	Going to War When you go to war against your enemies, you might see that they have horses and chariots. They might even have an army that is stronger than yours. But don't be afraid of them. The Lord your God will be with you. After all, he brought you up out of Egypt.
Revised English Bible	When you take the field against your enemies and are faced by horses and chariots, a force greater than yours, you need have no fear of them, for the LORD your God, who brought you up from Egypt, will be with you.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	When you proceed to war toward your enemies and see horses and chariots with more legions of people than you, never fear them. For Yahweh your God is with you and ascended you from the land of Egypt.
Bible in Basic English	When you go out to war against other nations, and come face to face with horses and war-carriages and armies greater in number than yourselves, have no fear of them: for the Lord your God is with you, who took you up out of the land of Egypt.
The Expanded Bible	Laws for War When you go to war against your enemies and you see horses and chariots and an army that is bigger than yours, don't be afraid of them. The Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, will be with you.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Laws of War. When you go to war with your enemies, and see horses and chariots,—a people more numerous than yourselves, fear them not,—for your EVER-LIVING GOD is with you, Who brought you from the land of Mitzeraim.
NET Bible®	<i>Laws Concerning War with Distant Enemies</i> When you go to war against your enemies and see chariotry [Heb "horse and chariot."] and troops [Heb "people."] who outnumber you, do not be afraid of them, for the Lord your God, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt, is with you. When it comes to making an actual material change to the text, the NET Bible® is pretty good about indicating this. Since most of these corrections will be clear in the more literal translations below and within the Hebrew exegesis itself, I will not continue to list every NET Bible® footnote.
NIV, ©2011	Going to War

When you go to war against your enemies and see horses and chariots and an army greater than yours, do not be afraid of them, because the Lord your God, who brought you up out of Egypt, will be with you.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

exeGesés companion Bible **THE TORAH ON WARRING**

When you go to war against your enemies and see horses and chariots and a people more than you, awe them not: for Yah Veh your Elohim is with you - who ascended you from the land of Misrayim.

Kaplan Translation

Preparing for War

When you go to battle against your enemies, and see horses, war chariots and an army larger than yours, do not be afraid of them, since God your Lord, who brought you out of Egypt, is with you. The Kaplan Translation, particularly in Exodus through Deuteronomy, takes note of historic rabbinic opinions.

Orthodox Jewish Bible

When thou goest out to milchamah against thine enemies, and seest sus (horses), and chariots, and a people more than thou, be not afraid of them; for Hashem Eloheicha is with thee, which brought thee up out of Eretz Mitzrayim.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version

When you go forth for battle against your enemies, and you see horses and chariots and a people more numerous than you, you should not fear them, for Yahweh your Elohim is with you, the One bringing you up from the country of Egypt.

English Standard V. – UK

Laws Concerning Warfare

"When you go out to war against your enemies, and see horses and chariots and an army larger than your own, you shall not be afraid of them, for the LORD your God is with you, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.

The updated Geneva Bible

When you go out to battle against your enemies, and see horses, and chariots, [and] a people more than you, be not afraid of them: for the LORD your God [is] with you, which brought you up out of the land of Egypt. Meaning, upon just occasion: for God does not permit his people to fight every time it seems good to them.

NASB

Laws of Warfare

"When you go out to battle against your enemies and see horses and chariots and people more numerous than you, do not be afraid of them; for the Lord your God, who brought you up from the land of Egypt, is with you.

New King James Version

Principles Governing Warfare

"When you go out to battle against your enemies, and see horses and chariots and people more numerous than you, do not be afraid of them; for the Lord your God is with you, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.

New RSV

When you go out to war against your enemies, and see horses and chariots, an army larger than your own, you shall not be afraid of them; for the Lord your God is with you, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.

Syndein/Thieme

{Subject - War}

When you go out to battle against your enemies, and see horses, and chariots, and a soldiers more than you have. . . be not afraid of them . . . for Jehovah/God your Elohiym/Godhead is with you . . . Who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. {Note: Jews did not traditionally have chariots and in most battles they were outnumbered. Yet they were commanded to Trust in the Lord and not be afraid.}.

Updated Bible Version 2.11	When you go forth to battle against your enemies, and see horses, and chariots, [and] a people more than you, you will not be afraid of them; for Yahweh your God is with you, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.
World English Bible	When you go forth to battle against your enemies, and see horses, and chariots, and a people more than you, you shall not be afraid of them; for Yahweh your God is with you, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.
Young's Updated LT	"When you go out to battle against your enemy, and have seen horse and chariot—a people more numerous than you—you are not afraid of them, for Jehovah your God is with you, who is bringing you up out of the land of Egypt.

The gist of this verse: The Jews are not to be afraid in battle, even if their enemy appears to have a great military advantage over them.

Deuteronomy 20:1a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
<p>BDB gives this list of definitions: 1) <i>that, for, because, when, as though, as, because that, but, then, certainly, except, surely, since</i>; 1a) <i>that</i>; 1a1) <i>yea, indeed</i>; 1b) <i>when (of time)</i>; 1b1) <i>when, if, though (with a concessive force)</i>; 1c) <i>because, since (causal connection)</i>; 1d) <i>but (after negative)</i>; 1e) <i>that if, for if, indeed if, for though, but if</i>; 1f) <i>but rather, but</i>; 1g) <i>except that</i>; 1h) <i>only, nevertheless</i>; 1i) <i>surely</i>; 1j) <i>that is</i>; 1k) <i>but if</i>; 1l) <i>for though</i>; 1m) <i>forasmuch as, for therefore</i>.</p>			
<p>Kîy, like many of the small words in Hebrew, has a large number of uses: ❶ It is used as a relative conjunction, particularly after the verbs <i>seeing, hearing, speaking, knowing, believing remembering, forgetting</i> and in such cases means <i>that</i>. ❷ Although kîy is used for consecution and effect and rendered <i>to that, that</i>; it sometimes has an intensifying force and is rendered <i>so that, so even, even</i>. This is how it is used in this context. ❸ The connective can be used of time and be rendered <i>at that time, which, what time, when</i>. ❹ Kîy can be used of time, but in such a way that it passes over to a demonstrative power where it begins an apodosis (<i>then, so</i>). ❺ It can be used as a relative causal particle: <i>because, since, while, on account that</i>. When we find it several times in a sentence, it can mean <i>because...and</i> or <i>for...and</i>. ❻ It can also have a continuous disjunctive use here and be rendered <i>for...or...or</i> (when the second two kîy's are preceded by conjunctions). ❼ After a negative, it can mean <i>but</i> (the former must not be done because the latter is to be done).</p>			
yâtsâ' (יָצָא) [pronounced yaw-TZAWH]	<i>to go [come] out, to go [come] forth; to rise; to flow, to gush up [out]</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3318 BDB #422
lâmed (ל) [pronounced le]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mil ^e châmâh (מִלְחָמָה) [pronounced mil-khaw-MAW]	<i>battle, war, fight, fighting; victory; fortune of war</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4421 BDB #536
'al (עַל) [pronounced gah/]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of relative proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
'âyab (אֵיבָב) [pronounced aw-YA ^B V]	<i>enemy, the one being at enmity with you; enmity, hostility</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #340 & #341 BDB #33

Translation: *When you go forth to war against your enemies...* Throughout much of Deuteronomy, Moses uses the 2nd person masculine singular verbs and suffixes when speaking to the Jews. Many times when we would have expected Moses to address these people as a whole, as an army, as a nation, as a collective, he speaks to them individually or, at the very least, as a collective whole.

Therefore, Moses is not talking about the army of Israel going out to fight against their enemies—Moses is specifically speaking to Charley Brown and how Charley Brown will go out to war against Israel's enemies (called *his enemies*). This is all extraordinarily personal.

Israel would never be without enemies. In this world, if you are aligned with God, then Satan will encourage others to be aligned against you. The only time there is an exception to this is when you, as a believer, are already doing Satan's work for him. Perhaps you have little or no doctrine in your soul, so that all that you stand for is exactly opposed to the plan of God. Under those circumstances Satan might leave you alone. However, at the same time, if you have believed in Jesus Christ, that makes God your Father, and God, as your Father, might whup you a bit. *My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reprov'd by Him; for whom the Lord loves he disciplines, and he skins alive with a whip every son whom He receives* (Heb. 12.5b–6; R. B. Thieme, Jr. translation).

My point is, you don't get a break. You cannot play God. You cannot believe in His Son, and then turn around and do Satan's bidding without consequences. And if you are successfully living the Christian life, then you will have enemies that way too. This is no nice middle ground where you produce just the least amount of **divine good** that keeps you off of God's or Satan's radar.

So Israel would be going to war on many occasions. When David was king, Israel appeared to be at war nearly every year. David (or Joab) would defeat one army, and another nation would send an army in their place. However, by the time that Solomon came along, God gave peace to Israel. When Israel got further from God, then discipline increased, and foreign armies became much more menacing.

Deuteronomy 20:1b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
râ'âh (רָאָה) [pronounced raw-AWH]	<i>to see, to look, to look at, to view, to behold; to observe; to perceive, to understand, to learn, to know</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7200 BDB #906
çûwç (סוּס) [pronounced soos]	<i>horse, chariot horse; swallow, swift</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #5483 BDB #692
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
rekeb (בָּכָר) [pronounced REH-khe ^b v]	<i>riders, cavalry; chariot; horses; the upper millstone [riding on a lower millstone]</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7393 BDB #939

Apparently, the Jew saw this chariot as one unit comprised of 3 parts: the chariot, the rider and the horse. This word could refer to any of the 3 or to the unit as a whole.

Translation: ...and you see horses and chariots... This man, when going to war, is going to look about, and he will see horses and chariots (also found in the singular, but can be understood as an army of chariots). This means that they are going into a war where they have much less by way of equipment than their enemies.

The Canaanites and the Philistines had iron chariots, as we will see in Joshua 17:16 Judges 4:3 1Sam. 13:5. We know that the Egyptians used chariots in war from Ex. 14:7. The Syrians also were fond of using the chariot in war (2Sam. 8:4 1Chron. 18:4 19:18 Psalm 20:8). Obviously, for chariots to be of any use, they require horses, so the Canaanites would have horses as well. We will hear about the horsemen in 1Sam. 13:5.

Israel functioned primarily with an infantry for a very long time. The nations around Israel built up their armor—meaning they developed greater weapons and utilized horses and chariots in war—and yet, for that 1000 or so years, when Israel was an independent nation, Israel defeated many of her enemies. It was only when Israel fell into great spiritual depravity that she began to lose wars.

Therefore, Israel was not to be concerned when it could see that the army they faces was superior in numbers or weaponry.

Application: This does not mean that we, in the United States, because many of us believe in Jesus Christ, that we should operate with the fewest weapons possible. We do not go into war with a bag of sawed-off shotguns. This is a different era. Although we are a **client nation** to God, we do not have the same relationship with God as Israel did. God gave them that plot of land that they lived on, and God would defend this land against all comers, no matter how great the opposing army (there is one portion of a chapter in 2Samuel where David defeats an army which changes ancient history—and its worldwide import is almost completely lost to us, except that we know of their army and of their might). God did this as a sign to all of the other peoples around Israel. They could come to Israel to express faith in Israel's God because Israel was so amazing in war. However, we, as a client nation, are to do the prudent thing, and to build up our military to the point where only the most foolish nation would think to oppose us.

Deuteronomy 20:1c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'am (אָם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
rab (רַב) [pronounced <i>rah^bv</i>]	<i>many, much, great (in the sense of large or significant, not acclaimed)</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #7227 BDB #912
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4480 BDB #577

Translation:...—a people greater than you... Not only does Israel see great technological advances for that day and time, but the armies which they faces were often much larger. God is telling them not to worry about this.

Deuteronomy 20:1d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lô' (לֹא or לוֹל) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
yârê' (יָרֵא) [pronounced yaw-RAY]	<i>to fear, to be afraid; to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3372 BDB #431
min (מִן) [pronounced min]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #4480 BDB #577

Translation: ...—*you will not fear them...* God orders them here not to fear these foreign armies, no matter what the situation—no matter how well-armed they are, no matter how advanced they are, and no matter how large the army is. Moses is telling this people not to fear them.

No other army in the history of the world had a protector like Y^ehowah, the God of Israel. Therefore, Moses reassures Israel concerning warfare on several occasions: “If you should say in your heart, ‘These nations are greater than I; how can I dispossess them?’ You will not be afraid of them; you will well remember what Y^ehowah your God did to Pharaoh and to all of Egypt.” (Deut. 7:17–18). “Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for Y^ehowah your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you.” (Deut. 31:6).

We have had times in our history where God has preserved us in battle, but Israel is given full assurances of God’s participation in her battles. Obviously, with God as their Protector and Leader, Israel did not have to be concerned about being outnumbered or about having inferior equipment. *Some [boast] in chariots, and some in horses; but we will boast in the name of Y^ehowah our God* (Psalm 20:7). God only expected for Israel to lean upon Him, rather than any human ally: *Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, [who] rely upon horses and trust in chariots because they are many, and in horsemen because they are very strong. But they do not look to the Holy One of Israel, nor seek Y^ehowah!* (Isa. 31:1).

The Open Bible: *It is better to have a few absolutely committed persons than a multitude of the half-hearted. God will get greater glory from the small army than from the large one (see Judges 7:3 Zech 4:6).*⁵

Deuteronomy 20:1e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yoh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

⁵ *The Open Bible*; the New Living Translation; Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, TN; ©1996, p. 263 (footnote).

Deuteronomy 20:1e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿĒlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	<i>God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #430 BDB #43
ʿîm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem</i>]	<i>with, at, by, near; like; from</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity; with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

Translation: ...for Y^ehowah your Elohim [is always] with you—... This is because the Lord God is with Israel and He will always be with them. They may depend upon this throughout their history. And when the army places their faith in the power of their God, their army is great. But if they depend upon an alliance with a different country, like Egypt, they will lean on Egypt as if a walking stick, and that sharp walking stick will pierce through their hand.

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown: *In the approaching invasion of Canaan, or in any just and defensive war, the Israelites had reason to expect the presence and favor of God.*⁶

The mental attitude of the Generation of Promise was crucial to their survival. Moses told their parents, generation X, the same thing: “Do not rebel against Y^ehowah; and do not fear the people of the land, for they will be our prey. Their protection has been removed from them and Y^ehowah is with us—do not fear them.” But all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night. And all the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron; and the whole congregation said to them, “Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died in this wilderness!” (Num. 14:9, 1–2). This left God with only one alternative: [God speaking to Moses]: “Say to them: ‘As I live,’ says Y^ehowah, ‘just as you have spoken in My hearing, so I will certainly do to you; your corpses will fall in this wilderness, even all your numbered men, according to your complete number from twenty years old and upward, who have grumbled against Me.’ “ (Num. 14:28–29). The Generation of Promise has two choices: they could choose God and believe in Him and live or distrust the Word of God and die, as their parents did.

When David faced Goliath, this was his mental attitude: Then David said to the Philistine: “You come to me with a sword, a spear, and a javelin, but I come to you in the name of Y^ehowah of the armies, who you have taunted.” (1Sam. 17:45).

The promise which I heard many times in church went as follows: “Do not fear, for I am with you, do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, certainly I will help you, and certainly I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.” (Isa. 41:10). That is a promise for all believers in Jesus Christ throughout the ages.

⁶ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, Deut. 20:1.

Deuteronomy 20:1f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʿâlâh (אֵלָהּ) [pronounced <i>gaw-LAWH</i>]	<i>the one bringing, the one taking, the one leading up</i>	masculine plural, Hiphil participle; with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5927 BDB #748
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>min</i>]	<i>from, off, out from, of, out of, away from, on account of, since, than, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
ʿerets (אֶרֶץ) [pronounced <i>EH-rets</i>]	<i>earth (all or a portion thereof), land, territory, country, continent; ground, soil; under the ground [Sheol]</i>	feminine singular construct	Strong's #776 BDB #75
Mits ^e rayim (מִצְרַיִם) [pronounced <i>mits-RAH-yim</i>]	<i>double straights; transliterated Mizraim; also Egypt, Egyptians</i>	proper noun	Strong's #4714 BDB #595

Translation:...[He is] the One Who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. Moses personalizes this—Jesus Christ, the God of Israel, brought you—Charley Brown—personally out of Egypt. Egypt, at that time, had one of the greatest armies in the world, and God took 2 million people out of Egypt, and this great Egyptian army could not stop them.

People seem to have two opposing mindsets for the same set of current events. On the one hand, each generation thinks that human history is all about them, and all about their thoughts and dreams and aspirations. It may not strike them until they are in their 50's and 60's that they have done no better a job than their parents who came before them. But, until that time, they think they are the center of the universe, the coolest, hippest generation yet. Then, suddenly, they find that they are old—and, in many cases, without the appropriate wisdom to accompany their age.

However, on the other hand, there are dramatic, historical events which take place during their lives and they do not fully appreciate the impact of these events. Most people do not have any sort of an historical perspective, because, insofar as they are concerned, real human history did not begin until the day they were born. For this reason, they tend to make a big deal of events which are meaningless in the scale of world events; and, simultaneous, not recognize the historic importance of other events until much later.

Let's look at those people in their 20's and 30's—they may look a Lady Gaga, who appears to have come to the end of her run, as really something in the music scene, almost revolutionary. She is another singer who had a good run. She might be around for another decade or so and she might not. However, what is far more important on an historic scale is, what about the overtures just made by Iran toward the United States (I write this in September of 2013)? These overtures could change world history and the environment of the United States forever. This nation is quite close to becoming a nuclear power—they are somewhat of a nutty regime quite devoted to Islam, and with a great hate toward the United States and Israel. If, during these talks (which may or may not take place) stifle Israel from taking out their nuclear sites, and they develop nuclear weapons in the midst of these talks, this will change everything. And since Islam is very much into asymmetric warfare, and our borders remain porous, it is only a matter of time before a nuclear weapon or perhaps several, make their way across the Mexican border into the United States—which weapons could be either used in large American cities or set up in various American cities and used to blackmail the United States. The things which may occur while our fairly naive president engages in talks with Iran could change everything here. Now, at this point, we don't know if these talks will occur. We do not know if this will prevent Israel from striking. However, these are big events. What some

singer does is, on the whole, not all that important by comparison (and maybe my example of Lady Gaga could have been more perceptive for that age range).

The point I am making is, these Israelites have been with Moses, in the desert, after seeing God take them out of Egypt—events which will change human history—and they may not be fully appreciative of what has taken place—partially because they were children when all of this place and partially because people have a hard time sorting out history as it unfolds before them. Furthermore, these children (now adults) have watched their own parents drop one by one in the desert, all dying the sin unto death. So they have relatively little guidance from their parental units.

When speaking with the Jews, God, speaking through Moses or through whomever, often begins with Egypt and His taking the Israelites out of Egypt. When it comes to events in ancient history, I suspect that this is in the top 5 of those known throughout the world (which events would include the worldwide flood, David's killing of Goliath, and the events of the public ministry of Jesus Christ).

What happened in Egypt and in the desert is something that we study today, and so do Jews. In fact, there are very few people who do not have some idea about God leading the Jews out of Egypt (whether they choose to believe this historical fact or not). At the same time, Satan has taken these events and has been working overtime to give them some weird interpretation related to Blacks and slavery and socialism. That is what Satan does—he distorts the truth. Communists were having a very difficult time making headway in Latin and South America, because they could not successfully challenge the Bible and the Catholic church. So, what they finally figured out was to study the Bible and take portions out of the Bible and distort them, and present these things as Biblical truth (this is Liberation Theology and Black Liberation Theology). And because the people in Latin and South America did not know the Scriptures well, many countries fell into communism. Communists would explain, “We are just trying to get the same results as the Bible. We support the same things as the Bible does. We are helping the poor.” If the people do not know the Scriptures, then it is easy to fool them.

Application: This is the approach of many liberal websites. You can count on several things in a liberal website: distorted statistics, a blame-America-first attitude, and disparagement of the Bible. I have taken the time to make comments at such websites, particularly when the Bible is presented in a negative and inaccurate light, and in several instances, my remarks have been removed. The dishonest graphic about the Bible is *never* removed; but often (not always), my remarks to explain the dishonesty of the graphic are removed (I have had this happen twice, for instance, in Facebook, where my comments were no longer allowed, and thereby removed from all *discussions*—they aren't really discussions; they are more like echo chambers). Liberalism is the thinking of Satan. It is not presented for discussion (unless the liberal is able to clearly win the debate). It is a collection of lies and half-truths, and when successfully challenged, the one who challenged is removed, but never the lies and half-truths. The last time that this occurred for me was, a particular dishonest graphic was not shared by most of the subscribers to that page, and I remarked something along the lines of, “Maybe some of you are beginning to recognize how dishonest some of these graphics are and you are choosing not to share them” (or words to that effect). Bam. I was no longer allowed to make remarks after that.

The Voice, a translation which I am warming up to, translates this verse as follows: **Moses:** *This is how you should act during wartime: When you go to battle against your enemies, if you see their army is larger than yours and they have horses and chariots, don't be afraid of them! The Eternal your God is with you—the same God who defeated Pharaoh and brought you out of Egypt.* The italics simply indicate additional text, added much like the targum text, to better explain the verse, to fill in possibly things which are missing in the verse to help with the understanding (this does not mean that this words in italics were originally in the earliest Hebrew text; but sometimes words and phrases are left out simply because that is the style of the writer—or speaker, as is the case here).

When going to war, what is most important is the spiritual factor. In order to be ready to face the enemy, the soldier needs spiritual guidance and fortitude.

And he was in their drawing near unto the battle and has been brought near the priest and he has spoken unto the people and he has said unto them, “Hear, O Israel, you [all are] drawing near the day to the battle against your enemies. Will not be timid your heart—you [all] will not fear and you [all] will not retreat and you [all] will not tremble from their faces, for Y^ehowah your Elohim the One going with you to battle for you [all] with your enemies to deliver you [all].”

Deuteronomy
20:2–4

And it is when they draw near to the war that the priest will be brought near [to them] and he will make a proclamation to the people, saying, “Hear, O Israel, you [are all now] drawing near this [lit., *the*] day to war against your enemies. [Let] your hearts not become fearful—you will not fear and you will not retreat and you will not be terrified because of them, for Y^ehowah your Elohim is going with you to fight for you against your enemies to deliver you [from them].”

When they are ready to go to battle, the priest will be brought forward and he will proclaim to the people, “Listen, O Israel, on this day that you are drawing near to go to war against your enemies. Do not allow your hearts to become fearful—do not become fearful or terrified because of them and do not retreat—for Jehovah your God will go with you into this battle against your enemies and He will deliver you from them.”

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos

And at the time that you draw nigh to do battle, the priest shall approach and speak with the people, and say to them, Hear, Israel, you draw near this day to fight against your adversaries; let not your heart be moved, be not afraid, tremble not, nor be broken down before them: for the Shekinah of the Lord your God goeth before you to fight for you against your enemies, and to save you.

Latin Vulgate

And when the battle is now at hand, the priest shall stand before the army, and shall speak to the people in this manner: Hear, O Israel, you join battle this day against your enemies, let not your heart be dismayed, be not afraid, do not give back, fear ye them not: Because the Lord your God is in the midst of you, and will fight for you against your enemies, to deliver you from danger.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And he was in their drawing near unto the battle and has been brought near the priest and he has spoken unto the people and he has said unto them, “Hear, O Israel, you [all are] drawing near the day to the battle against your enemies. Will not be timid your heart—you [all] will not fear and you [all] will not retreat and you [all] will not tremble from their faces, for Y^ehowah your Elohim the One going with you to battle for you [all] with your enemies to deliver you [all].”

Peshitta (Syriac)

And when you come near to the battle, the priest shall approach and speak to the people, And shall say to them, Hear, O Israel, you approach this day to the battle with your enemies; let not your heart faint, fear not, and do not tremble, neither be terrified because of them; For the LORD your God is he that goes with you, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, and it is he who shall fight for you with your enemies, and he shall save you.

Septuagint (Greek)

And it shall come to pass whenever you shall draw near to battle, that the priest shall draw near and speak to the people, and shall say to them, Hear, O Israel; you are going this day to battle against your enemies: let not your heart faint; fear not, neither be confounded, neither turn aside from their face. For it is the Lord your God who advances with you, to fight with you against your enemies, and to save you.

Significant differences:

The targum often has additional phrases in it, as noted above.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	As you advance toward the war, the priest will come forward and will address the troops. He will say to them: "Listen, Israel: Right now you are advancing to wage war against your enemies. Don't be discouraged! Don't be afraid! Don't panic! Don't shake in fear on account of them, because the Lord your God is going with you to fight your enemies for you and to save you."
Contemporary English V.	Before you march into battle, a priest will go to the front of the army and say, "Soldiers of Israel, listen to me! Today when you go into battle, don't be afraid of the enemy, and when you see them, don't panic. The LORD your God will fight alongside you and help you win the battle."
Easy English	Just before you begin to fight, the *priest must come to the front of the army. He must say, "**Israelites, listen to me! Today you are going to fight your enemies. Do not be troubled or afraid. Be brave! Do not run away from your enemies because you are frightened. The *Lord your God is going with you. He will fight for you and you will win."
Easy-to-Read Version	"When you go to the battle, the priest must go to the soldiers and speak to them. The priest will say, 'Men of Israel, listen to me! Today you are going against your enemies in battle. Don't lose your courage! Don't be troubled or upset! Don't be afraid of the enemy! Why? Because the Lord your God is going with you. He will help you fight against your enemies. The Lord your God will help you win!'
Good News Bible (TEV)	Before you start fighting, a priest is to come forward and say to the army, 'Men of Israel, listen! Today you are going into battle. Do not be afraid of your enemies or lose courage or panic. The LORD your God is going with you, and he will give you victory.'
<i>The Message</i>	When the battle is about to begin, let the priest come forward and speak to the troops. He'll say, "Attention, Israel. In a few minutes you're going to do battle with your enemies. Don't waver in resolve. Don't fear. Don't hesitate. Don't panic. GOD, your God, is right there with you, fighting with you against your enemies, fighting to win."
New Life Bible	When you are coming near the battle, the religious leader will come near and speak to the people. He will say to them, 'Hear, O Israel. Today you are going into battle against those who hate you. Do not let your hearts become weak. Do not be afraid and shake in fear before them. For the Lord your God is the One Who goes with you. He will fight for you against those who hate you. And He will save you.'
New Living Translation	When you prepare for battle, the priest must come forward to speak to the troops. He will say to them, 'Listen to me, all you men of Israel! Do not be afraid as you go out to fight your enemies today! Do not lose heart or panic or tremble before them. For the Lord your God is going with you! He will fight for you against your enemies, and he will give you victory!'
The Voice	As you are approaching the battlefield, your priest will come over to you and address you: "Listen, Israel! Today you're going to fight a battle against your enemies. Don't be intimidated by them! Don't be afraid! Don't run away! Don't let them terrify you! The Eternal, your True God, has come out here with you, and He'll fight for you against your enemies and save you."

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And before you go to fight; the Priests must come and speak to the people, and tell them: <i>Listen, O IsraEl! Today you're going to fight against your enemies. So, be courageous! Don't be afraid, don't get confused, and don't retreat; because, Jehovah your God is with you and He will fight against your enemies and save you!</i>
Beck's American Translation	When there's a battle ahead of you, a priest should step forward and talk to the troops. 'Listen, Israel,' he should tell them, 'today you're going to fight against your enemies. Don't let them make you feel timid, afraid, alarmed or terrified, because

	the LORD your God is going with you to fight your enemies for you and give you the victory.'
Christian Community Bible	When the hour of battle draws near, the priest shall advance to the head of the army and shall speak to the people saying: "Listen, Israel, today you are to enter into battle against your enemies. Do not let your heart be discouraged, or afraid or troubled, and do not tremble before them, for Yahweh, your God, is with you, to fight in your favor against your enemies and save you."
God's Word™	Before the battle starts, a priest must come and speak to the troops. He should tell them, "Listen, Israel, today you're going into battle against your enemies. Don't lose your courage! Don't be afraid or alarmed or tremble because of them. The LORD your God is going with you. He will fight for you against your enemies and give you victory."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	When the hour of battle draws near, the high priest will take his stand there in front of the ranks, and say to the people, Listen, Israel; as you join battle to-day with your enemies, there must be no faint hearts among you, no flinching, no yielding, no trembling here. The Lord your God is here in the midst of you, and will fight on your side against your adversaries, to deliver you in the hour of peril.
New American Bible	"When you are about to go into battle, the priest shall come forward and say to the soldiers: 'Hear, O Israel! Today you are going into battle against your enemies. Be not weakhearted or afraid; be neither alarmed nor frightened by them. For it is the LORD, your God, who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies and give you victory.'
New American Bible (R.E.)	When you are drawing near to battle, the priest shall come forward and speak to the army, and say to them, "Hear, O Israel! Today you are drawing near for battle against your enemies. Do not be weakhearted or afraid, alarmed or frightened by them. For it is the LORD, your God, who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies and give you victory." Dt 1:30; 3:22; Ex 14:14; 15:3; Jos 23:10; Jgs 4:14.
NIRV	Just before you go into battle, the priest will come forward. He'll speak to the army. He'll say, "Men of Israel, listen to me. Today you are going into battle against your enemies. Don't be scared. Don't be afraid. Don't panic. Don't be terrified by them. The Lord your God is going with you. He'll fight for you. He'll help you win the battle over your enemies."
New Jerusalem Bible	When you are about to join battle, the priest must come forward and address the people. He must say to them, "Listen, Israel: today you are about to join battle with your enemies. Do not be faint hearted. Let there be no fear or trembling or alarm as you face them. Yahweh your God is marching with you, to fight your enemies for you and make you victorious."
New Simplified Bible	»A priest must come and speak to the troops before the battle begins. He should say: »Listen, Israel, today you are going into battle against your enemies. Do not lose your courage! Do not be afraid. Do not tremble because of them. »Jehovah your God is going with you. He will fight for you against your enemies and give you victory.
Revised English Bible	Then when fighting impends, the priest must come forward and address the army in these words: "Hear, Israel! Now that you are about to join battle with your enemy do not lose heart or be afraid; do not let alarm affect you, and do not give way to panic in face of them. The LORD your God accompanies you to fight for you against your enemy and igves you the victory."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	When war is nearing, the priest approaches and speaks to the people, saying to them, "Hear, Israel! You near a war today toward your enemies. Do not tenderize your hearts. Never fear, never hustle, and never cower in front of them. For Yahweh your God goes with you to fight for you with your enemies to save you."
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Bible in Basic English	And when you are on the point of attacking, let the priest come forward and say to the people, Give ear, O Israel: today you are going forward to the fight; let your heart be strong; do not let uncontrolled fear overcome you because of those who are against you; For the Lord your God goes with you, fighting for you to give you salvation from those who are against you.
The Expanded Bible	The priest must come [approach] and speak to the army before you go into [engage in] battle. He will say, "Listen, Israel! Today you are going into battle against your enemies. Don't lose your courage [heart] or be afraid. Don't panic or be frightened [in dread], because the Lord your God goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies and to save you [give you the victory]."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	And when you are preparing for the war, the Priest shall come forward and address the People and say to them, " Listen, Israel ! You are now preparing for war with your enemies. Let not your heart shrink. Fear not, nor be startled, nor terrified at them ! for your Ever-living God marches with you, to fight for you against your enemy, and save you."
HCSB	When you are about to engage in battle, the priest is to come forward and address the army. He is to say to them: 'Listen, Israel: Today you are about to engage in battle with your enemies. Do not be fainthearted. Do not be afraid, alarmed, or terrified because of them. For the LORD your God is the One who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to give you victory.'
NET Bible®	As you move forward for battle, the priest [The reference to the priest suggests also the presence of the ark of the covenant, the visible sign of God's presence. The whole setting is clearly that of "holy war" or "Yahweh war," in which God himself takes initiative as the true commander of the forces of Israel (cf. Exod 14:14-18; 15:3-10; Deut 3:22; 7:18-24; 31:6, 8).] will approach and say to the soldiers [Heb "and he will say to the people." Cf. NIV, NCV, CEV "the army"; NRSV, NLT "the troops."], "Listen, Israel! Today you are moving forward to do battle with your enemies. Do not be fainthearted. Do not fear and tremble or be terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you to fight on your behalf against your enemies to give you victory [Or "to save you" (so KJV, NASB, NCV); or "to deliver you."]."

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	When you are about to go into battle, the cohen is to come forward and address the people. He should tell them, 'Listen, Isra'el! You are about to do battle against your enemies. Don't be fainthearted or afraid; don't be alarmed or frightened by them; because ADONAI your God is going with you to fight on your behalf against your enemies and give you victory.
exeGesés companion Bible	And so be it, when you approach the war, the priest approaches and words to the people, and says to them, Hear, O Yisra El, you approach this day to battle against your enemies: neither tenderize your hearts nor awe nor hasten nor terrify at their face; for Yah Veh your Elohim is he who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.
Kaplan Translation	When you approach [the place of] battle [(Yad, Melakhim 7:3).], the priest [A priest anointed especially for war (Sotah 42a).] shall step forward and speak to the people. He shall say to them, 'Listen, Israel, today you are about to wage war against your enemies. Do not be faint-hearted, do not be afraid, do not panic, and do not break ranks before them. God your Lord is the One who is going with you. He will fight for you against your enemies, and He will deliver you.'

Orthodox Jewish Bible	And it shall be, when ye are come nigh unto the milchamah, that the kohen shall approach and speak unto the people, And shall say unto them, Shema, Yisroel, ye approach today unto milchamah against your enemies; let not your hearts faint; fear not, and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified because of them; For Hashem Eloheicha is He that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	"And it shall be, when you draw near to the battle, that the priest shall come and speak to the people, and shall say to them, 'Hear, O Yisra' ĕl: You are drawing near today to battle with your enemies. Do not let your heart faint, do not fear, or tremble, or be afraid before them, for יהוה your Elohim is He who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.'

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	And when you come near to the battle, the priest shall approach and speak to the men, And shall say to them, Hear, O Israel, you draw near this day to battle against your enemies. Let not your [minds and] hearts faint; fear not, and do not tremble or be terrified [and in dread] because of them. For the Lord your God is He Who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to save you.
Context Group Version	And it shall be, when you { pl } draw near to the battle, that the priest shall approach and speak to the people, and shall say to them, Hear, O Israel, you { pl } draw near this day to battle against your { pl } enemies: don't let your { pl } heart grow soft; don't fear, nor tremble, neither be { pl } afraid of them; for YHWH your { pl } God is he who goes with you { pl }, to fight for you { pl } against your { pl } enemies, to rescue you { pl }. The Context Group Version indicates when we have a plural when that is not clear to the reader. They do not do this for the singular.
NASB	When you are approaching the battle, the priest shall come near and speak to the people. He shall say to them, `Hear, O Israel, you are approaching the battle against your enemies today. Do not be fainthearted. Do not be afraid, or panic, or tremble before them, for the Lord your God is the one who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.'
New King James Version	So it shall be, when you are on the verge of battle, that the priest shall approach and speak to the people. And he shall say to them, `Hear, O Israel: Today you are on the verge of battle with your enemies. Do not let your heart faint, do not be afraid, and do not tremble or be terrified because of them; for the Lord your God is He who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.'
New RSV	Before you engage in battle, the priest shall come forward and speak to the troops, and shall say to them: `Hear, O Israel! Today you are drawing near to do battle against your enemies. Do not lose heart, or be afraid, or panic, or be in dread of them; for it is the Lord your God who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to give you victory.'
Syndein/Thieme	{What does an army need first? Spiritual Strength - Creating Moral Courage} And it shall be, when you are come near unto the battle, that the priest {communicates the written word of God} shall approach and speak unto the people. And shall say unto them, "Hear, O Israel, you approach this day unto battle against your enemies . . . 'do not be weak minded/'do not let not your hearts faint' {we would say 'do not crack under the pressure' - your norms and standards should be straight - this is RIGHT when done unto the Lord} . . . or afraid or panic/tremble, {this is the body - stay strong physically also} neither be you intimidated/terrified because of them for Jehovah/God your 'Elohim/Godhead is He Who marches with you . . . to fight for you against your enemies . . . to deliver you. " {no enemy can kill you unless God permits it!}.
Young's Updated LT	And it has been, in your drawing near unto the battle, that the priest has come nigh, and spoken unto the people, and said unto them, Hear, Israel, you are drawing near

to-day to battle against your enemies, let not your hearts be tender, fear not, nor make haste, nor be terrified at their presence, for Jehovah your God is He who is going with you, to fight for you with your enemies—to save you.

The gist of this verse:

When it comes close to going to battle, the priest will step before the army and encourage them, reminding them not to be afraid, as Y^ehowah Elohim will be with them, to deliver them.

Deuteronomy 20:2a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
Without a specific subject and object, the verb hâyâh often means <i>and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass</i> (with the wâw consecutive). It may be more idiomatically rendered <i>subsequently, afterwards, later on, in the course of time, after which</i> . Generally, the verb does not match the gender whatever nearby noun could be the subject (and, as often, there is no noun nearby which would fulfill the conditions of being a subject).			
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
qârab (בָּרַק) [pronounced <i>kaw-RA^{BV}</i>]	<i>to come near, to approach, to draw near</i>	Qal infinitive construct with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong #7126 BDB #897
The infinitive construct, when combined with the bêyth preposition, can often take on a temporal meaning and may be rendered <i>when [such and such happens]</i> . It can serve as a temporal marker that denotes an event which occurs simultaneously with the action of the main verb.			
'el (לְ) [pronounced <i>eh</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to, against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
mil ^e châmâh (הַמְחַלָּה) [pronounced <i>mil-khaw-MAW</i>]	<i>battle, war, fight, fighting; victory; fortune of war</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4421 BDB #536

Translation: *And it is when they draw near to the war that the priest will be brought near [to them]...* War, in Scripture, is a very spiritual thing, and I recognize that is difficult for some to swallow. There are so many people in the United States in particular who have lived in this marvelous cocoon where they have not been tapped to go to war, war has not come to them, and they somehow feel that, if they really, really want it, peace will come to the world. This simply is not so. Jesus warned, **“There will be wars and rumors of wars until I come.”** There are nations which avoid war for a number of reasons—having God’s blessing and having a very strong military will help a country to avoid war, which is where our country has been for over a century. However, this does not mean that there is a way for us to avoid war.

So Israel is about to go to war—and they did many, many times—and Moses says that a priest should come forward first.

We are in the devil's world. There will always be wars in this world. When it comes to Israel, there will be even greater danger, as Satan is always looking to destroy God's people, and he will do whatever he can to inspire vicious nations to attack them.

We are in the midst of a spiritual war, where the legions of Satan stand against the forces of God, and this war will play out and it will be resolved.

Therefore, it is fitting that the one to come forward and to speak to the troops is a priest.

Deuteronomy 20:2b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâgash (נָגַשׁ) [pronounced <i>naw-GASH</i>]	<i>to draw near, to be brought near</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphil perfect	Strong's #5066 BDB #620
kôhên (כֹּהֵן) [pronounced <i>koh-HANE</i>]	<i>priest</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3548 BDB #463
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
dâbar (דָּבַר) [pronounced <i>daw^b-VAHR</i>]	<i>to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
The Piel stem is intensive, making dâbar is stronger. It can carry with it the idea of providing guidance and direction, if not a set of mandates (and this would be determined by context). The kind of intensification is determined by context. The Piel may call for <i>talk, backed with action; give your opinion; expound; make a formal speech; speak out; talk it around, to give a somber and tragic report.</i>			
'el (אֵל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'am (אָם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

Translation: ...and he will make a proclamation to the people,... The priest will make a proclamation before the people; he is making a formal speech here.

The priest will step forward and speak to the people because Moses will no longer be with them.

Matthew Henry: *It is very fitting that armies should have chaplains, not only to pray for them, but to preach to them, both to reprove that which would hinder their success and to raise their hopes of it...[furthermore] it is the work of Christ's ministers to encourage his good soldiers in their spiritual conflict with the world and the flesh, and to assure them of a conquest, yea, more than a conquest, through Christ that loved us.*⁷

War, for the Israelites, was a spiritually significant experience. God had specific plans for the Israelites in war; primarily it was to destroy those degenerate peoples in the Land of Promise. Prior to battle, the priest, one who represented Israel to God, would approach them. This was not necessarily the High Priest. This practice had already been instituted by Moses when Israel went into battle against Midian—he sent Phineas, the son of Eleazar, who was the High Priest, along with the soldiers (Num. 31:6). There were even times the priests went into battle with the Israelites. When Joshua went into battle against Jericho, the Israelites rounded their fortified city as instructed by God, and seven priests carrying the ark of the covenant accompanied their armed forces (Joshua 6).

Key to this is preparation. The priest did not just give a pep talk minutes before going into battle. In this context, war is imminent, possibly unavoidable, but not immediate. This dismissal of certain groups of people (vv. 5–8), the appointment of lower rank authorities (v. 9) and approaching a city and offering them *peace* are all indications that the Israelites are preparing to go to war, but it will not be in the next fifteen minutes. The spiritual preparation takes a lifetime. At this point in time, the priest is merely reminding the people of what they have learned throughout their lives—that God will fight on their behalf and that they are not to worry.

The only true holy wars were those fought by Israel against the enemies of God. As long as their faith was in Him and as long as they obeyed Him, they would win battles and wars against all odds. Those wars which took place in the Middle Ages had nothing to do with being *holy*. They were heathen fighting against heathen, clinging to a God with Whom they had no relationship. This does not mean that we as Christians eschew war. We belong to a nation and we owe service and allegiance to that nation—in many cases, that will include joining the armed forces and possibly going to war. People tend to over-think this situation, but we are under authority and we are to obey that authority. Whatever the situation, as long as we remain in fellowship and continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord, God will guide us. And always carry with you the promise: “**Fear not and be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yea I will uphold you with the right hand of My righteousness.**” (Isa. 41:10). Being a soldier for your country is an honorable profession—a doctrine which we covered before in Num. 31:2. **Happy is Y^ehowah, my Rock, Who trains my hands for war—my fingers for battle. [He is] my loving kindness and my fortress, my stronghold and my deliverer, my shield and He in Whom I take refuge; [the One] Who subdues my people under me** (Psalm 144:1–2). Understanding and believing this was required of the Israeli soldiers.

Deuteronomy 20:3a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾamar (אמר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55

⁷ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*; from e-Sword, Deut. 20:1–9 (slightly edited).

Deuteronomy 20:3a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'el (אל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
shâma ^c (שמע) [pronounced shaw-MAHG]	<i>listen [intently], hear, listen and obey, [or, and act upon, give heed to, take note of], hearken to, be attentive to, listen and be cognizant of</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperative	Strong's #8085 BDB #1033
Yis ^e râ'êl (יִשְׂרָאֵל) [pronounced yis-raw-ALE]	<i>God prevails; contender; soldier of God; transliterated Israel</i>	masculine proper noun	Strong's #3478 & #3479 BDB #975

Translation: ...saying, "Hear, O Israel,... Remember where these people are. They are east of the Jordan River, not many days away from crossing over to take the land given them by God. These people have only recently experienced war in simply walking to this point. Moses is speaking to the people, but telling them that a priest, before they go to war, will need to stand before them and speak. The priest would address the people as a nation, as Israel had universal conscription for all the males of Israel.

Moses is standing before them and he is a priest, inasmuch as he represents them to God, and he is speaking to them now as if he were encouraging them himself before they go into battle.

Deuteronomy 20:3b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'attem (אתם) [pronounced aht-TEM]	<i>you all, you guys, you (often, the verb to be is implied)</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, personal pronoun	Strong's #859 BDB #61
qârêb (בָּרֵךְ) [pronounced kaw-RAY ^B V]	<i>approaching, coming near, drawing near</i>	adjective	Strong's #7131 BDB #898
yôwm (יוֹם) [pronounced yohm]	<i>day; time; today (with a definite article); possibly immediately</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
mil ^e châmâh (הַמְּחַלָּה) [pronounced mil-khaw-MAW]	<i>battle, war, fight, fighting; victory; fortune of war</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4421 BDB #536
'al (עַל) [pronounced gah]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of relative proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

Deuteronomy 20:3b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'āyab (אָיָב) [pronounced aw-YA ^B V]	<i>enemy, the one being at enmity with you; enmity, hostility</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #340 & #341 BDB #33

Translation: ...you [are all now] drawing near this [lit., the] day to war against your enemies. Whatever the circumstance, these Jews are drawing near to war against their enemies. These would be enemies who live on the outskirts and have been tempted by Satan to war against the Jews. This is to be expected. Satan will always be working to rid the world of Jews, and he will do everything possible to inspire nations to rise up against the Jews.

Deuteronomy 20:3c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'al (לֹא) [pronounced a]	<i>no, not; nothing; none; neither, nor; do not, let not [with a verb]; let there not be [with an understood verb];</i>	adverb of negation; conjunction of prohibiting, dehorting, deprecating, desire that something <i>not</i> be done	Strong's #408 BDB #39
rākak ^e (רָכַךְ) [pronounced raw-KAHK]	<i>to be tender, to be weak, to be soft [delicate]; to be softened, to be weakened; to be contrite [penitent] [in one's mind, soul]; to be timid, fearful</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #7401 BDB #939
lēbab (לֵבָב) [pronounced lay-BAHB ^V]	<i>mind, inner man, inner being, heart</i>	masculine singular noun with a 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #3824 BDB #523

Translation: [Let] your hearts not become fearful... Like many translators, I have inserted the word *let*. The priest is encouraging the army of Israel, and he warns them not to become fearful. This is when their emotions take over their thinking.

Deuteronomy 20:3d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
'al (לֹא) [pronounced a]	<i>no, not; nothing; none; neither, nor; do not, let not [with a verb]; let there not be [with an understood verb];</i>	adverb of negation; conjunction of prohibiting, dehorting, deprecating, desire that something <i>not</i> be done	Strong's #408 BDB #39

Deuteronomy 20:3d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yârê' (יָרֵא) [pronounced yaw-RAY]	<i>to fear, to be afraid; to fear-respect, to reverence, to have a reverential respect</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3372 BDB #431
wê (or vê) (וְ, וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'al (אֵל) [pronounced al]	<i>no, not; nothing; none; neither, nor; do not, let not [with a verb]; let there not be [with an understood verb];</i>	adverb of negation; conjunction of prohibiting, dehorting, deprecating, desire that something <i>not</i> be done	Strong's #408 BDB #39
châphaz (חָפַז) [pronounced khaw-fahz]	<i>to run away in fear, to retreat in alarm, to flee in haste, to flee in fright; to move away from because of trepidation; to make haste</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #2648 BDB #342

Translation: ...—**you will not fear and you will not retreat...** War is all about momentum, and when members of one army begin to retreat, that decides the momentum and often the outcome of the battle. The Jews cannot become faint; they cannot in war become fearful and then turn and run away from their enemies. This will cause all of their fellow soldiers to become fearful as well.

Châphaz (חָפַז) [pronounced khaw-fahz] means *to run away in fear, to retreat in alarm, to move away from out of trepidation*. This is why the KJV renders this as *hasten* and as *tremble*. Qal: Deut. 20:3 2Sam. 4:4 2Kings 7:15 Job 40:23 Psalm 31:32 116:11* Niphal: 1Sam. 23:26 Psalm 48:5 104:7.* Strong's #2648 BDB #342.

Deuteronomy 20:3e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
wê (or vê) (וְ, וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'al (אֵל) [pronounced al]	<i>no, not; nothing; none; neither, nor; do not, let not [with a verb]; let there not be [with an understood verb];</i>	adverb of negation; conjunction of prohibiting, dehorting, deprecating, desire that something <i>not</i> be done	Strong's #408 BDB #39
'ârats (רָעַת) [pronounced gaw-RAHTS]	<i>to cause to tremble, to tremble, to terrify, to feel dread</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6206 BDB #791
min (מִן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577

Deuteronomy 20:3e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
pānîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced paw-NEEM]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural noun (plural acts like English singular); with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815

Together, min pānîym and a suffix mean *from before their face, out from before their face, from them, from one's presence*. However, together, they can also be a reference to the cause, whether near or remote, and can therefore be rendered *because of them, by them*.

Translation: ...and you will not be terrified because of them,... The Jews must maintain a solid mental attitude, where they have not become afraid of their enemies (you may recall that this happened when Israel was first supposed to go into the land and take it from the south—they were afraid of their enemies, and God loathed that generation and He killed them all in the desert wilderness).

We have, in fact, a repetition of synonymous phrases, known as a synonymia [pronounced *sin-o-NIM-i-a*], combined with a polysyndeton, which uses several *and*'s. Together, these two concepts emphasize the importance, in this instance, of mental and emotional stability in war: **Do not allow your heart to become weak; do not fear and do not retreat in alarm and do not be terrified from before their face.** The key is a stable mental attitude by focusing upon God and His Word. We attempt to accomplish the same thing in our training of soldiers by repetition under normal circumstances, so that under the abnormal circumstances of war, the actions are performed almost as by rote.

Moses told the people in v. 1 not to be afraid. In the future, God will give the Israelites the same instructions, speaking through a priest, about their behavior in battle. There are certain behaviors to be found in battle and certain ones not to exhibit. They are not to fear their enemies. Because Y^ehowah their God would be with them, **“One of your men puts to flight a thousand, for Y^ehowah your God is He Who fights for you, just as He promised you.”** (Joshua 23:10). David, when speaking to his brothers and to other soldiers while they covered in their tents: **“Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should taunt the armies of the living God?”** (1Sam. 17:26b). David even comforted King Saul: **“Let no man's heart become weak on account of him; your servant will go and fight with this Philistine.”** (1Sam. 17:32b). David knew Bible doctrine and he knew that there was no reason to fear Goliath. Goliath was not challenging men; he was challenging God.

The Israelites are enjoined not to, in the midst of battle, retreat out of great fear. **For if God be for us, who can be against us?** (Rom. 8:31).

God will return to Israel in the Tribulation: **Say to those with an anxious heart, “Take courage, fear not. Observe, your God will come [in] vengeance; the recompense of God will come, but He will deliver you.”** (Isa. 35:4).

So far, vv. 2–3 read: **When they are ready to go to battle, the priest will be brought forward and he will proclaim to the people, “Listen, O Israel, on this day that you are drawing near to go to war against your enemies. Do not allow your hearts to become fearful—do not become fearful or terrified because of them and do not retreat—... This was quite a sore spot for this generation, because their parents were cowards in war. Moses is speaking to the generation of promise, the sons of Gen X. God killed all the members of Gen X by means of the sin unto death. God had given the land of Canaan to the Exodus generation, Gen X, the adults who walked out of Egypt, seeing many signs and wonders. God gave them the land and told them to go in and take it. However, they became afraid because when scouting out the land, it became clear that some of these people were giants (they were much larger than the Israelites). And the people of Israel cried and shook with fear, because God wanted them to go to war and to take the land, and their enemies would be too fearsome. All of this is recorded in**

Num. 13–14. And How did God feel about that generation? For forty years I loathed that generation and said, "They are a people who go astray in their thinking, and they have not known My ways." (Psalm 95:10). For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses [which is Gen X]? And with whom was God provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness [the sin unto death]? And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient? (Heb. 3:16–18). And how did they sin? They were faithless, they did not trust God, and they did not go to war to take the land as God had told them to. [Most of this was taken from the **Doctrine of War** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#))]. When God is on your side, you cannot be terrified in war.

Deuteronomy 20:4

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ʿĒlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	<i>God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #430 BDB #43
hâlak ^e (הלך) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>the one walking, the one who is going, the one is departing, the one who is advancing [traveling]</i>	Qal active participle with the definite article	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
ʿîm (עם) [pronounced <i>geem</i>]	<i>with, at, by, near; like; from</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity; with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâcham (לחם) [pronounced <i>law- KHAHM</i>]	<i>to engage in battle, to engage in war, to wage war; to fight, to battle</i>	Niphal infinitive construct	Strong's #3898 BDB #535
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʿîm (עם) [pronounced <i>geem</i>]	<i>with, at, by, near; like; from</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
ʾâyab (אֵיב) [pronounced <i>aw-YA^BV</i>]	<i>enemy, the one being at enmity with you; enmity, hostility</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle with the 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #340 & #341 BDB #33
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

Deuteronomy 20:4

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
yâsha ^c (יָשָׁא) [pronounced yaw-SHAHG]	<i>to deliver, to save; to set free, to preserve; to aid, to give relief, to give help to</i>	Hiphil infinitive construct	Strong's #3467 BDB #446
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>you; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to, toward</i>	sign of the direct object affixed to a 2 nd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84

Translation: ...for Y^ehowah your Elohim is going with you to fight for you against your enemies to deliver you [from them].” God is not just on the side of the Israelites, but God goes to war against the enemies of Israel. Remember that these enemies are inspired by Satan to destroy God’s people, and therefore, God will protect Israel.

Here, there is a 2nd person masculine plural suffix added to *Elohim*; but when this word shows up again, it will be with the 2nd person masculine singular suffix.

*Guzik: When Israel was obedient, and trusting in God, they could never lose. But when they were disobedient, or not trusting, they could never win - even if they had superior forces.*⁸

The first 4 verses read as follows: When you go forth to war against your enemies and you see horses and chariots—a people greater than you—you will not fear them for Y^ehowah your Elohim [is always] with you—[He is] the One Who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. And it is when they draw near to the war that the priest will be brought near [to them] and he will make a proclamation to the people, saying, “Hear, O Israel, you [are all now] drawing near this [lit., *the*] day to war against your enemies. [Let] your hearts not become fearful—you will not retreat and you will not be terrified because of them, for Y^ehowah your Elohim is going with you to fight for you against your enemies to deliver you [from them].” Moses reminds these young people that they are standing before him, not as slaves, but as free men, because God delivered them out of Egypt. God has never before taken an entire people out of a country where they were enslaved and delivered them.

Israel should have had no difficulty when it came to war—whenever Israel was to go to war, the Creator of the Universe, Y^ehowah their God, went into battle with them. There was no army which could oppose Him. Moses told these men in the past: “Do not fear! Remain stabilized and see the deliverance of Y^ehowah which He will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever. Y^ehowah will fight for you while you keep silent.” (Ex. 14:13b–14). And Moses reminds them of this in this great series of messages: “Y^ehowah your God, Who goes before you, will Himself fight on your behalf, just as He did for you in Egypt before your eyes.” (Deut. 1:31). We will see another great example of this in 2Chron. 20:14–26. Therefore, I will not trust in my bow, nor will my sword deliver me; but You have delivered us from our adversaries, and You have put to shame those who hate us (Psalm 44:6–7).

⁸ David Guzik’s Commentary on the Old Testament; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; Deut. 20:2–4.

Deuteronomy 20:2–4. This graphic is from **African American History**. These soldiers are from World War II.

These soldiers are described as "On parade, the 41st Engineers at Ft. Bragg, NC in color guard ceremony." and originally comes from the **government archives**. Accessed September 28, 2013.

Our founders understood the importance of the spiritual side of war, and, for the reason, there has always been **chaplains in our military**.



[Chapter Outline](#)

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Military Exemptions

And has spoke the officer unto the people, to say, "What the man who has built a house new and he has not dedicated him. He will go back and let him return to his house lest he die in the battle and a man, another, dedicates him. Deuteronomy 20:5

Also an officer will speak to the people, saying, "Who [is] the man who has built a new house but he has not [yet] begun to use it—let him go back and return to his house so that he does not die in battle and another man dedicate his house [lit., *him, it*].

Also, an officer will speak to the army, asking, "Is there anyone here who has built a new house, but has not yet begun to enjoy it? Let that man go back and return to his home so that he does not die in battle without having the chance to enjoy his newly-built home.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos

And the officers will speak with the people, saying: Who is the man who has built a new house, and has not set fast its door-posts to complete it? Let him go and return to his house, lest through sin he be slain in the battle, and another man complete it.

Latin Vulgate	And the captains shall proclaim <u>through every band in the hearing of</u> the army: What man is there, that hath built a new house, and has not dedicated it? let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And has spoke the officer unto the people, to say, "What the man who has built a house new and he has not dedicated him. He will go back and let him return to his house lest he die in the battle and a man, another, dedicates him.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Then the scribes shall speak to the people, saying, What man is there who has built a new house, and has not dedicated it? Let him return and go to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the scribes shall speak to the people, saying, What man is there that has built a new house, and has not dedicated it? Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the war, and another man dedicate it.
Significant differences:	The targum defines what it means to <i>dedicate</i> a house; although that is not necessarily what is meant. The Latin has a weird phrase thrown in there as well.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Contemporary English V.	Then the tribal officials will say to the troops: If any of you have built a new house, but haven't yet moved in, you may go home. It isn't right for you to die in battle and for somebody else to live in your new house.
Easy English	Then the officers will say to the soldiers, "Has anyone built a new house but has not yet made it ready for God? He must go home. If he does not, he may die in the fight. Then someone else may make his house ready.
Easy-to-Read Version	"Those {Levite} officers will say to the soldiers, 'Is there any man here that has built a new house, but has not yet dedicated it? That man should go back home. He might be killed in the battle. And then another person will dedicate that man's house.
Good News Bible (TEV)	"Then the officers will address the men and say, 'Is there any man here who has just built a house, but has not yet dedicated it? If so, he is to go home. Otherwise, if he is killed in battle, someone else will dedicate his house.
<i>The Message</i>	Then let the officers step up and speak to the troops: "Is there a man here who has built a new house but hasn't yet dedicated it? Let him go home right now lest he die in battle and another man dedicate it.
New Life Bible	The leaders will speak to the people also, saying, 'Is there anyone among you who has built a new house and has not given it to God? Let him go and return to his house or he might die in battle and another man will give it to God.
New Living Translation	"Then the officers of the army must address the troops and say, 'Has anyone here just built a new house but not yet dedicated it? If so, you may go home! You might be killed in the battle, and someone else would dedicate your house.
The Voice	Then the officials will say to the people <i>who are eligible for a deferment</i> , "Has anyone just built a new house but hasn't begun to use it yet? Go back to your house, because if you died in this battle, someone else would dedicate it.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	'Then the scribes must speak to the people and say, If any man has built a new house and hasn't consecrated it yet, let him return to his home; otherwise he might die in the war and someone else would then consecrate it. Consecration is the solemn dedication to a special purpose or service, usually religious. The word "consecration" literally means "to associate with the sacred". Persons, places, or
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Christian Community Bible	things can be consecrated, and the term is used in various ways by different groups. A synonym for to consecrate is to sanctify; an antonym is to desecrate. ⁹ So the secretaries shall say to the people: "Is there anyone of you who has just built a new house and has not dedicated it? Let him go home; lest he die in battle and another dedicate it.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	And then, in the hearing of the whole army, each chieftain will make this proclamation to the men of his own company: Is there anyone here who has built a new house, and not yet handselled it? Let him go back home; shall he be slain in battle, and leave another to handsel it? It is not clear whether this implies a religious dedication; we do not read elsewhere of houses being so treated. Cf. 1Mac. 3.56.
New American Bible	"Then the officials shall say to the soldiers, 'Is there anyone who has built a new house and not yet had the housewarming? Let him return home, lest he die in battle and another dedicate it.
New American Bible (R.E.)	Then the officials shall speak to the army: "Is there anyone who has built a new house and not yet dedicated it? Let him return home, lest he die in battle and another dedicate it.
NIRV	The officers will speak to the army. They will say, "Has anyone built a new house and not started to live in it? Let him go home. If he doesn't, he might die in battle. Then someone else will live in his house.
New Jerusalem Bible	'The scribes will then address the people, as follows: "Has anyone built a new house and not yet dedicated it? Let him go home, in case he dies in battle and someone else performs the dedication.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	The officers will speak to the people, saying, "Who is the man that built a new house, but never dedicated it? You go and return to the house, otherwise by dying in war another man will dedicate it."
Bible in Basic English	And let the overseers say to the people, If there is any man who has made for himself a new house and has not gone into it, let him go back to his house, so that in the event of his death in the fight, another may not take his house for himself.
The Expanded Bible	The officers [or scribes] should say to the army, "Has anyone [Who has] built a new house but not given it to God [dedicated it]? He may go home, because he might die in battle and someone else would get to give his house to God [dedicate it].
Ferar-Fenton Bible	The Magistrates, also, shall address the People, saying; "What man is there who has built a new house, and not dedicated it? Let him go and return to his house, for fear he should be killed in the war, and another man should dedicate it.
HCSB	"The officers are to address the army, 'Has any man built a new house and not dedicated it? Let him leave and return home. Otherwise, he may die in battle and another man dedicate it.
NET Bible®	Moreover, the officers are to say to the troops [Heb "people" (also in vv. 8, 9).], "Who among you [Heb "Who [is] the man" (also in vv. 6, 7, 8).] has built a new house and not dedicated [The Hebrew term כְּנָחַךְ, (khanakh) occurs elsewhere only with respect to the dedication of Solomon's temple (1 Kgs 8:63 = 2 Chr 7:5). There it has a religious connotation which, indeed, may be the case here as well. The noun form (כְּנָחָה, khanukah) is associated with the consecration of the great temple altar (2 Chr 7:9) and of the postexilic wall of Jerusalem (Neh 12:27). In Maccabean times the festival of Hanukkah was introduced to celebrate the rededication of the temple following its desecration by Antiochus IV Epiphanes (1 Macc 4:36-61).] it?

⁹ From [Wikipedia](#) accessed September 21, 2013.

He may go home, lest he die in battle and someone else [Heb "another man."] dedicate it.

NIV, ©2011

The officers shall say to the army: "Has anyone built a new house and not yet begun to live in it? Let him go home, or he may die in battle and someone else may begin to live in it.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	"Then the officials will speak to the soldiers. They are to say, 'Is there a man here who has built a new house, but hasn't dedicated it yet? He should go back home now; otherwise he may die fighting, and another man will dedicate it.
exeGesés companion Bible	And the officers word to the people, saying, What man has built a new house and not hanukkahed it? Have him go and return to his house, lest he die in the war and another man hanukkah it.
Judaica Press Complete T.	And the officers shall speak to the people, saying, What man is there who has built a new house and has not yet inaugurated it? Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the war, and another man inaugurate it.
Kaplan Translation	The lower officers [Shotrim in Hebrew. See above 1:15.] shall then speak to the people, and say, 'Is there any man among you who has built a new house, and has not begun to live in it? Let him go home, so that he will not die in war and have another man live in it.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And the shoterim shall speak unto the people, saying, What ish is there that hath built a bais chadash, and hath not dedicated it? Let him go and return to his bais, lest he die in the milchamah, and another ish dedicate it.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And the superintendents will speak to the people, saying:Whoever the man be who has built a new house and has not dedicated it yet, may go and return to his house, lest he should die in the battle and another man should dedicate it.
English Standard Version	Then the officers shall speak to the people, saying, 'Is there any man who has built a new house and has not dedicated it? Let him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man dedicate it.
The updated Geneva Bible	And the officers will speak unto the people, saying, What man [is there] that has built a new house, and has not dedicated it? let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it. For when they first entered to dwell in a house, they gave thanks to God, acknowledging that they had that benefit by his grace.
Syndein/Thieme	{Verses 5-7. Evaluation of the Troops - Cases of Honorable Discharge from the Battle} And the officers shall also speak unto the soldiers, saying, "What man is there that has built a new house, and has not dedicated it?" Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it." {Note: Case of a 'bad attitude'. This is a young men with a new wife and children - no battle concentration - better to let him experience his house first, then fight in the next battle}
Young's Updated LT	"And the authorities have spoken unto the people, saying, 'Who is the man that has built a new house, and has not dedicated it? —let him go and turn back to his house, lest he die in battle, and another man dedicate it.

The gist of this verse: Besides the priest, a military officer will speak to the people and he will weed out some of those who are exempt from going to war.

Deuteronomy 20:5a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
dâbar (דָּבַר) [pronounced <i>daw^b-VAHR</i>]	<i>to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Piel perfect	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
shôṭêr (שׁוֹטֵר) [pronounced <i>show-TARE</i>]	<i>official, commissioned officer, officer; this word refers to an official or an officer who is not the highest in command, but holds a subordinate position</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #7860 BDB #1009

Translation: Also an officer will speak to the people,... A military officer will also speak to the army and he will pull out a number of people who do not need to be there.

A *commissioned officer* is the word shôṭêr (שׁוֹטֵר) [pronounced *show-TARE*] means *official, officer* who is not the highest in command, but holds a subordinate position. These officers organized the armies of Israel (Joshua 1:10 3:7). This same word is used for the overseers of Israel under Egyptian slavery (Ex. 5:14). Strong's #7860 BDB #1009.

Now we will hear the ways that keep a person from going out to battle with the enemy. There will be 4 exceptions—4 sets of people who do not have to go to war. The first one is the exception of the man who has recently built his own house. We have a Psalm which apparently was read at the dedication of a house built by David (or for David) in Psalm 30. We can assume that the time allotted to such a man would be a year, as was given to the newly married (Deut. 24:5). Josephus, in Ant. iv. 8, 41, concurs (although he also places a year as the time on the next verse, which would be incorrect).

Deuteronomy 20:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
'âmar (אָמַר) [pronounced <i>aw-MAHR</i>]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #559 BDB #55
mîy (מִי) [pronounced <i>mee</i>]	<i>who, whom; whose, whomever; what; occasionally rendered how, in what way</i>	pronominal interrogative; the verb <i>to be</i> may be implied	Strong's #4310 BDB #566

Deuteronomy 20:5b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural); with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81
bânâh (בָּנָה) [pronounced baw-NAWH]	<i>to build, to construct; to erect; to rebuild, to restore</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1129 BDB #124
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced BAH-yith]	<i>house, residence; household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1004 BDB #108
châdâsh (חָדָשׁ) [pronounced khaw-DAWSH]	<i>new, new thing; fresh</i>	masculine singular adjective	Strong's #2319 BDB #294

Translation: ...saying, “Who [is] the man who has built a new house... The first person who does not need to go to war is someone who has just built a new house. Often, the armies of Israel would go to war throughout the spring and summer, and partway into the fall, and then they would return home. Soldiers would occupy their time off, and some would build their own home during their time off. In fact, the first three things mentioned which exempt a soldier from a battle are things a soldier might do during his time off.

The verb is *bânâh* (בָּנָה) [pronounced *baw-NAWH*] means *to build* and this verb is in the perfect tense, meaning that we are speaking of a completed action. Therefore, the house has been completed. It may or may not be completely furnished and the fixtures may be in or not; but the house itself, the building of it, has been completed. Strong's #1129 BDB #124.

Deuteronomy 20:5c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
With a voluntative, cohortative or jussive, the wâw conjunction means <i>that, so that</i> . It expresses <i>intention</i> . The wâw conjunction can express informal inference or consequence (<i>so, then, therefore</i>); especially at the beginning of a speech. The wâw conjunction can connect alternative cases or contrasting ideas and be properly rendered <i>or, but, yet</i> . The wâw conjunction can also be rendered <i>for</i> .			
lô' (לֹא or לוֹ) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
chânak ^e (חָנַךְ) [pronounced khaw-NAK ^e]	<i>to dedicate; to begin to use, to initiate use; to train [up]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2596 BDB #335

Deuteronomy 20:5c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Gesenius gives ¹⁰ this some unusual meanings: <i>to make narrow; to put something into the mouth; to give to be tasted; to imbue [someone with something]; to instruct, to train up.</i> When applied to inanimate things (Gesenius), it means <i>to initiate, to dedicate, to commence to use.</i>			

Translation: ...but he has not [yet] begun to use it... The verb found here is *chânak*^e (חָנַךְ) [pronounced *khaw-NAK*^e]. Gesenius gives¹¹ this some unusual meanings: *to make narrow; to put something into the mouth; to give to be tasted; to imbue [someone with something]; to instruct, to train up.* When applied to inanimate things (Gesenius), it means *to initiate, to dedicate, to commence to use.* *Chânak*^e (חָנַךְ) [pronounced *khaw-NAK*^e] is generally rendered *dedicate* and is found twice in this verse, and in 1Kings 8:63 2Chron. 7:5 and Prov. 22:6 (all in the Qal stem).^{*} In 1Kings 8:63, Solomon offers **22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep—so the king and all the sons of Israel dedicated the house of Y^ehowah.** 2Chron. 7:5 is a parallel passage. Prov. 22:6 reads: *Dedicate a child according to his way he should go; even when he is old, he will not depart from it.* Obviously, this has to be more than some one-shot ceremony performed while the kid is an infant. It is a day-in and day-out process. For the child, it involves guidance and proper direction. So what is involved is probably more than a ceremony, but it is a day-in and day-out choosing of the impact and direction of the house. Strong's #2596 BDB #335.

Gower remarks: *Houses...were looked upon as the gift of God, and when a house was first built, there was an act of dedication.*¹²

We may assume that he has built this house and has lived in it for less than a week; or, perhaps, he even has a few things to complete on it. Furthermore, there was probably a demonstrative ceremony which took place in that day, where God is formally thanked for the home. This is probably very similar to a housewarming party today, but with expressing clear gratitude toward God for this blessing. Some of us recognize that a new house or a new car, or food from our garden (or from the store) is a great blessing from God. Now, we may not hold a house blessing party, but, certainly within our own family, thanks ought to be expressed to God.

The NET Bible explains this word: The Hebrew term *חָנַךְ* (*khanakh*) occurs elsewhere only with respect to the dedication of Solomon's temple (1Kgs 8:63 = 2Chr 7:5). There it has a religious connotation which, indeed, may be the case here as well. The noun form (*חֲנֻכָּה*, *khanukah*) is associated with the consecration of the great temple altar (2Chr 7:9) and of the postexilic wall of Jerusalem (Neh 12:27). In Maccabean times the festival of Hanukkah was introduced to celebrate the rededication of the temple following its desecration by Antiochus IV Epiphanes (1Macc 4:36-61).¹³

Freeman has nothing of note to add to this, saying that *we are not informed as to the ceremonies accompanying the dedication of a dwelling.* He mentions some customs held by the rabbins, which may or may not be pertinent, and adds that Egyptians and Hindus have some sort of a dedication ritual which they perform.¹⁴

However, when we are lacking in solid historical confirmation or evidence of a particular Jewish custom or historical note, we should allow God's Word to interpret itself, which allows me to give the interpretation which I have given. Our application to today becomes obvious: we all have dwelling places and they are either, by our daily actions and thoughts, dedicated to the things of this world or dedicated to God. There is no phoney, one-shot

¹⁰ H. W. F. Gesenius, *Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*; ©1979 by Baker Books; p. 292.

¹¹ H. W. F. Gesenius, *Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*; ©1979 by Baker Books; p. 292.

¹² *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times*; Ralph Gower; ©1987 by Moody International; © by Moody Press; p. 31.

¹³ From <https://bible.org/netbible/index.htm?deu20.htm> accessed September 21, 2013.

¹⁴ *Manners and Customs of the Bible*; James M. Freeman; ©1972; p. 110.

ceremony which determines this. It is our day--to-day life within this home which determines to Whom it is dedicated.

What we do have is, **Psalm 30**, written by King David, appears to be the dedication of his own house (it may be a reference to the Temple,¹⁵ as these are the same words).

Deuteronomy 20:5d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hâlak ^e (הלך) [pronounced haw-LAHK ^e]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shûwb (שוב) [pronounced shoo ^b v]	<i>to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect; jussive	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
A jussive expresses the speaker's desire, wish or command. We often add into the translation <i>may</i> or <i>let</i> . ¹⁶ The jussive involves only the imperfect form of a verb and may be used in the 2 nd or 3 rd persons (although the latter is the most common).			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bayith (תיב) [pronounced BAH-yith]	<i>house, residence; household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1004 BDB #108

Translation: ...—let him go back and return to his house... I have placed the *let*, which would be a part of the jussive, with the first verb. This person is given an valid excuse to not go to war.

Moses recognized that (just as the Bible does) that one of the most important aspects of a man's life is the home that he lives in. In the ancient world, most men lived in one home after they left their parent's home. Therefore, where he lived was a lifetime thing. Today, we might live in 4 or 5 different houses—and far more if we rent instead of own.

I am sure that some of you have thought, "Well, why not time the building of your house (or, whatever) to happen before wartime, to get out of going to war?" A person would do this because he is a coward. The Bible does allow for cowards to not go to war. That will be v. 8.

Gower makes an interesting observation about this and the following 2 verses: *This was not simply humane treatment, but followed a religious conviction at the time which held that all undertakings had to be completed.*¹⁷

¹⁵ David did not build the Temple of God, but he anticipated its being built and wanted to build it himself.

¹⁶ This is all taken from *Biblical Hebrew*; by Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, pp. 131, 292.

¹⁷ *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times*; Ralph Gower; ©1987 by Moody International; © by Moody Press; p. 290.

Deuteronomy 20:5e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
pen (פֶּן) [pronounced <i>pen</i>]	<i>lest, peradventure, or else, in order to prevent, or, so that [plus a negative]</i>	conjunction	Strong's #6435 BDB #814
mûwth (מוֹת) [pronounced <i>mooth</i>]	<i>to die; to perish, to be destroyed; to be put to death; to die prematurely [by neglect of wise moral conduct]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #4191 BDB #559
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
mil ^e châmâh (מִלְחָמָה) [pronounced <i>mil-khaw-MAW</i>]	<i>battle, war, fight, fighting; victory; fortune of war</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4421 BDB #536

Translation: ...so that he does not die in battle... The worry is, this man may die in battle and never get to enjoy his own home that he just built. God gives us time to enjoy life on this earth.

Deuteronomy 20:5f

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ, וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i>]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
ʾachêr (אַחֵר) [pronounced <i>ah-KHEHR</i>]	<i>another, following, next; other as well as foreign, alien, strange</i>	adjective/substantive	Strong's #312 BDB #29
chânak ^e (חָנַךְ) [pronounced <i>khaw-NAK^e</i>]	<i>to dedicate; to begin to use, to initiate use; to train [up]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2596 BDB #335

Gesenius gives¹⁸ this some unusual meanings: *to make narrow; to put something into the mouth; to give to be tasted; to imbue [someone with something]; to instruct, to train up*. When applied to inanimate things (Gesenius), it means *to initiate, to dedicate, to commence to use*.

Translation: ...and another man dedicate his house [lit., *him, it*]. If this man dies, then another man will eventually buy his newly-built home and enjoy it himself.

One of the things implied by this verse, which is important, is that some men who went into battle were killed and they would not return. Even with God leading them into battle, there will still be some casualties—it will be their

¹⁸ H. W. F. Gesenius, *Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament*; ©1979 by Baker Books; p. 292.

time to go. We will all check out of this life; God has already determined the place and the time and the circumstances. We have no control over that. We need merely to be in His will, which includes being in fellowship and growing in grace and the knowledge of Bible doctrine. Here, Moses is allowing for such a one to enjoy a recent personal project (in this case, a newly-built home).

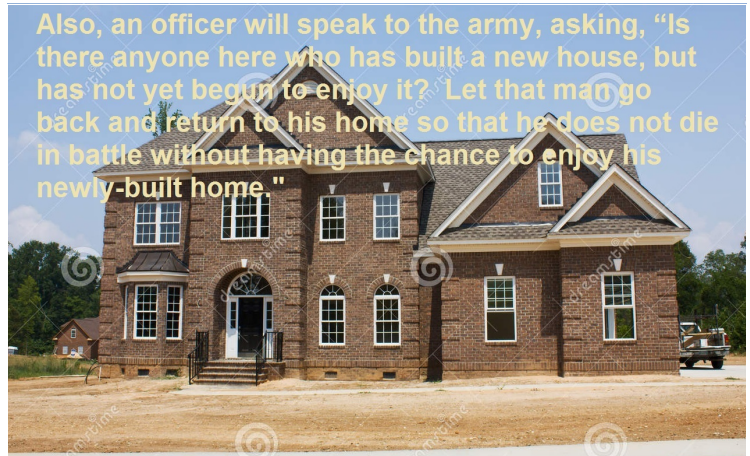
God gave the Land of Promise to His people. God wanted them to enjoy their stay in this land. He wanted them to have farms and homes and trees that produced almonds, olives and apricots.

Deut. 20:5. Graphic is from [Dreamstime](#), and is a royalty free stock image. Accessed September 28, 2013. Houses in the time of Israel were quite a bit smaller than this. They were usually a one-room home, with an open area at the top of the house, a courtyard and perhaps a stable of sorts.

Application: God is not against you enjoying your life or enjoying your environment. Learning Bible doctrine gives you the capacity to enjoy all that God has given you. I spend a huge amount of time in Bible study (3–4 hours a day and more), but that is not God's plan for every person. But God does expect us to be under a learned pastor-teacher and to spiritual grow under his ministry. God does expect us to learn daily His Word, because for the other 23 hours of that day, we will be pummeled with human viewpoint. The only way we can overcome human viewpoint thinking is to have a little divine viewpoint every day (about an hour is good). God gives us the rest of this time to enjoy our lives (and this includes your work, which is a blessing from God, just as your home is).

Application: I know unbelievers who, by every measure, ought to be happy. One couple I am thinking of are financially stable, their health has been, for the most part, good; they have a wonderful daughter and grandchildren (with a good son-in-law), and yet, they are not overwhelmingly happy. There are believers with much worse circumstances who are much happier. It is all related to capacity, and we develop capacity for life through the intake of Bible doctrine.

Application: God has designed this life for us to be contented and happy. Our lives may be short or they may continue over a long period of time, but God is not against happiness.



Also, an officer will speak to the army, asking, "Is there anyone here who has built a new house, but has not yet begun to enjoy it? Let that man go back and return to his home so that he does not die in battle without having the chance to enjoy his newly-built home."

And what man has set up a vineyard and has not profaned him. He will go and let him return to his house lest he die in the battle and a man another profane him.

Deuteronomy
20:6

And what man [here] has planted a vineyard but not [yet] eaten from it [lit., profaned it]? Let him go and return to his house so that he does not die in battle and another man eat from it [lit., profane it].

Is there any man here who has recently planted a vineyard, but has not harvest it yet? Let him return to his home so that he does not die in battle and another man enjoy the fruits of his labor.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos

Or, what man has planted a vineyard, and has not redeemed it from the priest [JERUSALEM. And has not redeemed it] to make it common? Let him go and

	return to his house, lest sin be the occasion of his not redeeming it, but he be slain in the battle, and another make it common.
Latin Vulgate	What man is there, that has planted a vineyard, and has not as yet made it to be common, whereof all men may eat? Let him go, and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man <u>execute his office</u> .
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And what man has set up a vineyard and has not profaned him. He will go and let him return to his house lest he die in the battle and a man another profane him.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And what man is there who has planted a vineyard, and has not <u>yet trod the grapes of it</u> ? Let him return and go to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man <u>tread its grapes</u> .
Septuagint (Greek)	And what man is there that has planted a vineyard, and not <u>been made merry with it</u> ? Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man be <u>made merry with it</u> .
Significant differences:	There are some disagreements as to exactly what <i>to make common</i> , <i>to profane</i> means; so there is some interpretation found in the Syriac and the Greek. This verb is repeated at the end of the verse. Interestingly enough, the Latin appears to give it a completely different translation at that point.

All of the translations moved jussive back one verb, as I did in my nearly literal translation.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Or is there anyone here who has planted a vineyard but hasn't yet put it to good use? He can leave and go back to his house; otherwise, he might die in the battle and someone else would use the vineyard.
Contemporary English V.	If any of you have planted a vineyard but haven't had your first grape harvest, you may go home. It isn't right for you to die in battle and for somebody else to enjoy your grapes.
Easy English	Has anyone planted a field with *grapes but has not yet enjoyed the fruit? He must go home. If he does not, he may die in the fight. Then someone else will enjoy the fruit.
Easy-to-Read Version	Is there any man here that has planted a field of grapes, but has not yet gathered any of the grapes? That man should go back home. If that man dies in the battle, then another person will enjoy the fruit from his field.
Good News Bible (TEV)	Is there any man here who has just planted a vineyard, but has not yet had the chance to harvest its grapes? If so, he is to go home. Otherwise, if he is killed in battle, someone else will enjoy the wine.
New Century Version	Has anyone planted a vineyard and not begun to enjoy it? He may go home, because he might die in battle and someone else would enjoy his vineyard.
New Life Bible	Is there anyone who has planted grape vines and has not begun to eat their fruit? Let him go and return to his house or he might die in the battle and another man will begin to eat the fruit.
New Living Translation	Has anyone here just planted a vineyard but not yet eaten any of its fruit? If so, you may go home! You might die in battle, and someone else would eat the first fruit.
The Voice	Has anyone planted a vineyard but hasn't enjoyed its fruit yet? Go back to your house, because if you died in this battle, someone else would be the first to enjoy its fruit.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	<i>And any man who has planted a vineyard and not yet [enjoyed its wine] may go home; otherwise, he might die in the battle and then someone else would get to enjoy it.</i>
Beck's American Translation	Has anyone planted a vineyard and not started to enjoy its grapes? Go back home, or you may die in battle and someone else will start enjoying its grapes.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Is there anyone here who has planted a vineyard, and not shared the first vintage of it with his neighbors [There is no reference in the Hebrew text to this exercise of public hospitality.]? Let him go back home; shall he be slain in battle, and another take his place?
New American Bible	Is there anyone who has planted a vineyard and never yet enjoyed its fruits? Let him return home, lest he die in battle and another enjoy its fruits in his stead.
New American Bible (R.E.)	Is there anyone who has planted a vineyard and not yet plucked its fruit? Let him return home, lest he die in battle and another pluck its fruit.
NIRV	Has anyone planted a vineyard and not started to enjoy it? Let him go home. If he doesn't, he might die in battle. Then someone else will enjoy his vineyard.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	"Who is the man that planted a vineyard, but it never began? Go and return to the house, otherwise by dying in war another man will begin it."
Bible in Basic English	Or if any man has made a vine-garden without taking the first-fruits of it, let him go back to his house, so that in the event of his death in the fight, another may not be the first to make use of the fruit.
The Expanded Bible	Has anyone [Who has] planted a vineyard and not begun to enjoy it? He may go home, because he might die in battle and someone else would enjoy his vineyard.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	"And what man has planted a vineyard and has not reaped it ? Let him go and return to his home, for fear he should be killed in the war, and another man reap it.
NET Bible®	Or who among you has planted a vineyard and not benefited from it? He may go home, lest he die in battle and someone else benefit from it.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	"Is there a man here who has planted a vineyard, but hasn't yet made use of its fruit? He should go back home; otherwise he may die fighting, and another man will use it.
exeGesés companion Bible	And what man planted a vineyard and not yet plucked thereof? Have him go and return to his house, lest he die in the war and another man pluck thereof.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	Is there anyone who has planted a vineyard but has never harvested it? Let him go back to his home, lest he die in battle and another harvest it.
Judaica Press Complete T.	And what man is there who has planted a vineyard, and has not yet redeemed it? Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the war, and another man redeem it.
Kaplan Translation	'Is there any man among you who has planted a vineyard and has not redeemed its first crop [On the fourth year, as in Leviticus 19:24. (Rashi; Saadia). Or, 'enjoyed' (Chizzkuni).]? Let him go home so that he not die in war and have another man redeem its crop.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And what ish is he that hath planted a kerem (vineyard), and hath not yet eaten of it? Let him also go and return unto his bais, lest he die in the milchamah, and another ish eat of it.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And whoever the man be who has planted a vineyard and has not taken it yet for profane use may go and return to his house, lest he should die in the battle and another man should take it for profane use.
English Standard Version	And is there any man who has planted a vineyard and has not enjoyed its fruit? Let him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man enjoy its fruit.
The Geneva Bible	And what man [is he] that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not [yet] eaten of it [The Hebrew word signifies to make common or profane, (Leviticus 19:25)]? let him [also] go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man eat of it.
NASB	Who is the man that has planted a vineyard and has not begun to use its fruit [Lit treat(ed) it as common]? Let him depart and return to his house, otherwise he might die in the battle and another man would begin to use its fruit [Lit treat(ed) it as common].
Syndein/Thieme	"And what man is he that has planted a vineyard, and has not yet 'reaped its harvest'/'eaten of it'? Let him also go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man eat of it." {Note: Second case of a 'bad attitude' - a griper. He is a new business person with his mind on business instead of war. So, again no battle concentration - better to let him taste a little business success, then fight later.}
Webster's Bible Translation	And what man [is he] that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not [yet] eaten of it? let him [also] go and return to his house, lest he should die in the battle, and another man should eat of it.
World English Bible	What man is there who has planted a vineyard, and has not used the fruit of it? let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man use the fruit of it.
Young's Updated LT	"And who is the man that has planted a vineyard, and has not made it common? —let him go and turn back to his house, lest he die in battle, and another man make it common.
The gist of this verse:	A person who has recently planted a garden should return for the harvest, if this is the first harvest.

Deuteronomy 20:6a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
mîy (מִי) [pronounced <i>mee</i>]	<i>who, whom; whose, whomever; what; occasionally rendered how, in what way</i>	pronominal interrogative; the verb <i>to be</i> may be implied	Strong's #4310 BDB #566
'îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i>]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural); with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>uh-SHER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81

Deuteronomy 20:6a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nâṭa' (נָטַח) [pronounced naw-TAHṬ]	to set upright; to plant; to place; to fix, to fasten [with a nail]; to pitch [a tent], to set up; figuratively to establish	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5193 BDB #642
kerem (כֶּרֶם) [pronounced keh-REM]	vineyard, orchard, a cultivated garden	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3754 BDB #501
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô' (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced low]	not, no	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
châlal (חָלַל) [pronounced khaw-LAHL]	to profane, to make [to treat as] common, defile, pollute; to violate the honour of, dishonour; to violate [break] (a covenant); to cast down, to destroy	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel perfect with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2490 BDB #320

In Deut. 20:6, the vineyard is, for all intents and purposes, virginal—it has not been used or harvested from. It is in a pristine state. The first harvest makes the vineyard *common, used, no longer in a pristine state*.

There are several translations for this verb given in BDB, none of which really match its used here. Owen, the HCSB and the ESV render this *enjoy its fruit*; A Conservative Version, Green's Literal translation and the WEB render this *use its fruit; use the fruit of it*. Only a few translators try to make do with the given translations: Voice in the Wilderness renders this *violate it*; and the CLV *take it for profane use*.

Translation: *And what man [here] has planted a vineyard but not [yet] eaten from it [lit., profaned it]? Someone may have just launched a new business venture. Remember, these are mostly citizen soldiers, who spend most of their lives as normal people, living on the land, farming, marrying, giving in marriage, etc. Now and again, a man enters into a new business venture, or, as suggested here, has just planed a new vineyard. He has not yet profaned it or made it common; indicating that he has not harvested this vineyard yet. The officer is saying that he needs to get his enterprise off the ground for its first year. The idea here is, he would be too distracted to think when in battle.*

Châlal (חָלַל) [pronounced khaw-LAHL] is one of the more unusual words in the Hebrew. It has several disparate meanings, which are hard to reconcile to one another. Its root means *to bore*, by implication meaning *wound, dissolve*. BDB gives three separate definitions and listings for this verb, and I will try to correlate them. Men killed using swords and arrows, and those who died had been pierced. Because death is so closely associated with defilement and uncleanness, this word also came to mean *defiled, polluted*., as well as *pierce, bore*. It means *pollute, defile, profane*.¹⁹ *Profane* is something properly applied in relationship to God and to that which is holy, such as the Sabbath (see Lev. 20:3 Neh. 13:18 Ezek. 23:39).²⁰ Finally, in this passage, the vineyard is, for all intents and purposes, virginal—it has not been used or harvested from. It is in a pristine state. The first harvest makes the vineyard *common, used, no longer in a pristine state*. Strong's #2490 BDB #319–320.

¹⁹ Châlal also means *begin* primarily when found in the Hiphil stem (see Gen. 11:6 Deut. 16:9 2Chron. 31:10), and rarely in the Piel (Deut. 20:6 28:30).

²⁰ For those who cannot distinguish between profanity, obscenity and the use of expletives, profanity is properly taking God's name in vain, by using in conjunction with expletives or using it in such a way as to trivialize God, as in *oh my God*.

The fruit of a vineyard was not to be eaten for three years and in the fourth, it was considered holy to God, an offering to Him (Lev. 19:23–25). It was the fifth year when they could eat of the fruit. It was in this way that they *profaned* the vineyard. That is, it was no longer brought as a holy offering to God. Therefore, the time period of exemption from the military for this man could be up to four years.

Again, as before, there was unfinished business in the life of this person going to battle; God allows him to harvest his vineyard in the fifth year, so that it is not on his mind during battle. In modern life, we might apply this to a new business venture or a new career.

Just like the building of the house, this is a new thing which has not quite yet been taken to completion.

With regards to the draft, we did this, allowing student in the midst of college to remain in college and to receive a deferment until they had completed their college. This is very similar.

Deuteronomy 20:6b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hâlak ^e (הלך) [pronounced haw-LAHK ^e]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shûwb (שוב) [pronounced shoo ^b v]	<i>to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect; jussive	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
A jussive expresses the speaker's desire, wish or command. We often add into the translation <i>may</i> or <i>let</i> . ²¹ The jussive involves only the imperfect form of a verb and may be used in the 2 nd or 3 rd persons (although the latter is the most common).			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced BAH-yith]	<i>house, residence; household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1004 BDB #108

All of this v. 6b is an exact repeat, word-for-word of v. 5d.

Translation: *Let him go and return to his house...* We had exactly this phrase before; the officer is saying that this man may return to his home and finish out the first year of this new business venture.

²¹ This is all taken from *Biblical Hebrew*; by Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, pp. 131, 292.

Deuteronomy 20:6c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
pen (פֶּן) [pronounced <i>pen</i>]	<i>lest, peradventure, or else, in order to prevent, or, so that</i> [plus a negative]	conjunction	Strong's #6435 BDB #814
mûwth (מוּת) [pronounced <i>mooth</i>]	<i>to die; to perish, to be destroyed; to be put to death; to die prematurely</i> [by neglect of wise moral conduct]	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #4191 BDB #559
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
mil ^e châmâh (מִלְחָמָה) [pronounced <i>mil-khaw-MAW</i>]	<i>battle, war, fight, fighting; victory; fortune of war</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4421 BDB #536
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ, וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced <i>eesh</i>]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
âchêr (אַחֵר) [pronounced <i>ah-KHEHR</i>]	<i>another, following, next; other as well as foreign, alien, strange</i>	adjective/substantive	Strong's #312 BDB #29
châlal (חָלַל) [pronounced <i>khaw-LAHL</i>]	<i>to profane, to make</i> [to treat as] <i>common, defile, pollute; to violate the honour of, dishonour; to violate</i> [break] <i>(a covenant); to cast down, to destroy</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel perfect with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #2490 BDB #320

In Deut. 20:6, the vineyard is, for all intents and purposes, virginal—it has not been used or harvested from. It is in a pristine state. The first harvest makes the vineyard *common, used, no longer in a pristine state*.

There are several translations for this verb given in BDB, none of which really match its used here. Owen, the HCSB and the ESV render this *enjoy its fruit*; A Conservative Version, Green's Literal translation and the WEB render this *use its fruit; use the fruit of it*. Only a few translators try to make do with the given translations: Voice in the Wilderness renders this *violate it*; and the CLV *take it for profane use*.

Translation: *...so that he does not die in battle and another man eat from it* [lit., *profane it*]. The officer is concerned that he may die in battle—possibly in part because he is distracted over this venture—and if this happens, another man will come in and enjoy the fruits of his labor.

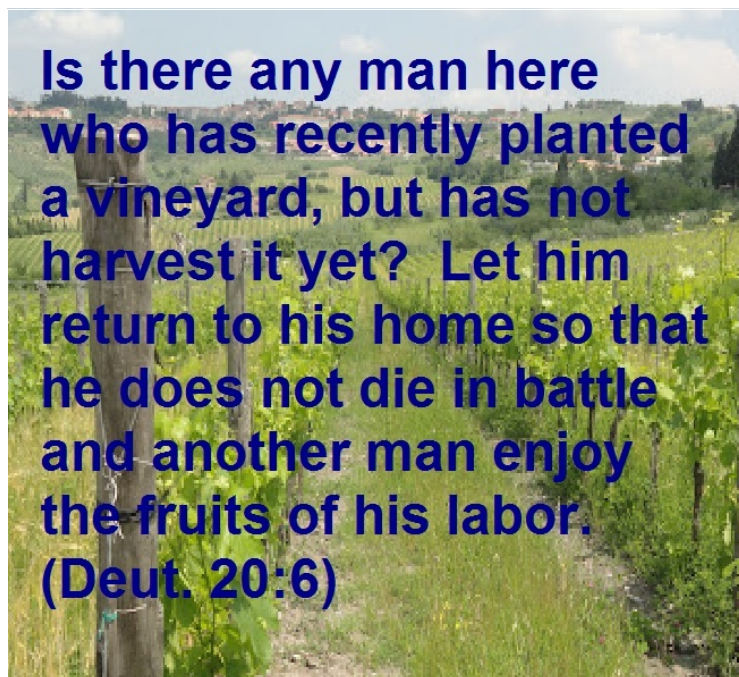
Paul will use this to illustrate to the tight-fisted²² Corinthians why he and Barnabas should be remunerated for their spiritual services: *Or do only Barnabas and I not have a right to refrain from working* [i.e., side jobs so that they may teach and do missionary work]. *Who at any time serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat the fruit of it? Or who tends a flock and does not use the milk of the flock? I am not speaking these things according to human judgment, am I? Or does not the Law also say these things? For it*

²² They were tight-fisted, but probably the richest of the people to whom Paul ministered.

is written in the Law of Moses, “You will not muzzle the ox while he is threshing.” If we sowed spiritual things in you, is it too much if we should reap material things from you? (1Cor. 9:6–9a, 11).

In the millennium, the planting again of vineyards and the building again of personal residences will be a sign of God’s return to Israel: Thus says Y^ehowah God, “When I gather the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and I manifest My holiness in them in the sight of the nations, then they will live in their land which I gave to My servant Jacob. And they will live in it securely; and they will build houses, plant vineyards, and live securely, when I execute judgments upon all who scorn them around about them. Then they will know that I am Y^ehowah their God.” (Ezek. 28:25–26).

Deuteronomy 20:6 graphic is from the **Passionate Foodie**, accessed September 28, 2013. God allows for men to enjoy in life what He had given them to enjoy.



And what man who is betrothed to a woman and has not taken her. He will go and let him return to his house lest he die in the battle and a man another take her.

Deuteronomy 20:7

And [is there] a man [here] who is betrothed to a woman, but has not [yet] taken her. Let him go and return to his house, so that he does not die in battle and another man take her.

Is there a man here betrothed to a woman, but has not yet consummated the marriage? Let him return to his house so that he does not die another man take her.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos

And what man hath betrothed a wife, but not taken her? Let him go and return to his house, lest sin prevent him from rejoicing with his wife and he be slain in the battle, and another take her.

Latin Vulgate

What man is there, that has espoused a wife, and not taken her? Let him go, and return to his house, lest he die in the war, and another man take her.

Masoretic Text (Hebrew)

And what man who is betrothed to a woman and has not taken her. He will go and let him return to his house lest he die in the battle and a man another take her.

Peshitta (Syriac)

And what man is there who has betrothed a wife, and has not taken her? Let him return and go to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man take her.

Septuagint (Greek)

And what man *is there* that has betrothed a wife, and has not taken her? Let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man take her.

Significant differences:

The targum, as usual, includes some additional commentary.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Or is there anyone here who is engaged but not yet married? He may leave and go back to his house; otherwise, he might die in the battle and someone else would marry his fiancée."
Contemporary English V.	If any of you are engaged to be married, you may go back home and get married. It isn't right for you to die in battle and for somebody else to marry the woman you are engaged to.
Easy English	Has anyone promised to marry a woman? If he has not married her yet, he must go home. He may die in the fight and then another man will marry her."
Easy-to-Read Version	Is there any man here that is engaged to be married? That man should go back home. If he dies in the battle, then another man will marry the woman he is engaged to.'
<i>The Message</i>	Is there a man here engaged to marry who hasn't yet taken his wife? Let him go home right now lest he die in battle and another man take her."
The Voice	Has anyone become engaged to a woman but hasn't consummated the marriage? Go back to your house, because if you died in this battle, someone else would take her."

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	<i>And if any man is engaged [to marry] and has not yet taken his woman, he should go home; otherwise he might die in the battle and then someone else would have her.</i>
Christian Community Bible	Is there anyone who has made a promise to marry and has not yet been married? Let him go back to his home at once, lest he die in combat and another take the woman as his wife."
<i>God's Word</i> TM	If you are engaged to a woman but have not married her, you may go home. Otherwise, you might die in battle, and someone else will marry her."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Is there anyone here that is betrothed to a maid, and has not taken her to himself? Let him go back home; shall he be slain in battle, and leave her to wed another?
New American Bible (R.E.)	Is there anyone who has betrothed a woman and not yet married her? Let him return home, lest he die in battle and another marry her." Deut. 24:5
NIRV	Has anyone promised to get married to a woman but hasn't done it yet? Let him go home. If he doesn't, he might die in battle. Then someone else will marry her."
New Jerusalem Bible	"Has anyone contracted to marry a girl and not yet married her? Let him go home, in case he dies in battle and someone else marries her."
Today's NIV	Has anyone become pledged to a woman and not married her? Let him go home, or he may die in battle and someone else marry her."

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	"Who is the man that betrothed a woman, and never took her? Go and return to the house, otherwise by dying in war, another man will take her."
Bible in Basic English	Or if any man is newly married and has had no sex relations with his wife, let him go back to his house, so that in the event of his death in the fight, another man may not take her.
The Expanded Bible	Is any man [^L Who is] engaged to a woman and not yet married to her? He may go home, because he might die in battle and someone else would marry her."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	"And what man is engaged to a woman, and has not married her? Let him go and return to his home, for fear he should be killed in the war, and another man marry her."
NET Bible [®]	Or who among you [Heb "Who [is] the man."] has become engaged to a woman but has not married her? He may go home, lest he die in battle and someone else marry her."

NIV, ©2011

Has anyone become pledged to a woman and not married her? Let him go home, or he may die in battle and someone else marry her."

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	"Is there a man here who is engaged to a woman, but hasn't married her yet? He should go back home; otherwise he may die fighting, and another man will marry her.'
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	Is there anyone who has paid the bride-price for a wife [Thereby making her his wife legally, even though the marriage has not yet taken place.], but who has not yet married her? Let him go back to his home, lest he die in battle and another marry her.:
Kaplan Translation	'Is there any man among you who has betrothed a woman and not married her? Let him go home, so that he not die in war and have another man marry her.' Betrothal rights (erusin) is the first step in marriage, where the couple are legally married, and the marriage can only be dissolved by an official bill of divorce. Today, the giving of the ring is the betrothal ceremony. Adultery with a betrothed girl is a crime punishable by death. Deuteronomy 22:23 f (Rashbam). The second step of marriage is when the husband brings the bride into his domain (nesuin).
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And what ish is there that hath betrothed an isha, and hath not taken her? Let him go and return unto his bais, lest he die in the milchamah, and another ish take her.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Green's Literal Translation	And who is the man who has betrothed a woman, and has not taken her? Let him go and return to his house, that he not die in the battle, and another man take her.
NASB	And who is the man that is engaged to a woman and has not married [Lit taken] her? Let him depart and return to his house, otherwise he might die in the battle and another man would marry [Lit take] her.'
New RSV	Has anyone become engaged to a woman but not yet married her? He should go back to his house, or he might die in the battle and another marry her.'
Syndein/Thieme	"And what man is there that has betrothed a wife, and has not 'had marital intercourse'/'taken her'? let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man 'has sex with her'/'take her'." {Note: Third case of a bad mental attitude going into battle. This man is engaged only and not yet with her. So, is another example of no battle concentration - love on his mind!}
World English Bible	What man is there who has pledged to be married a wife, and has not taken her? let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man take her.
Young's Updated LT	"And who is the man that has betrothed a woman, and has not taken her? —let him go and turn back to his house, lest he die in battle, and another man take her.

The gist of this verse: A man who is about to get married receives a deferment until his marriage has been consummated.

Deuteronomy 20:7a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

Deuteronomy 20:7a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mîy (מִי) [pronounced mee]	<i>who, whom; whose, whomever; what; occasionally rendered how, in what way</i>	pronominal interrogative; the verb <i>to be</i> may be implied	Strong's #4310 BDB #566
ʾîysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural); with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced uh-SHER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> is implied	Strong's #834 BDB #81
ʾâras (אָרַשׁ) [pronounced aw-RAHS]	<i>to betroth, to marry, to get married to, to espouse, to make one a wife; to become engaged to</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel perfect	Strong's #781 BDB #76
ʾîshshâh (אִשָּׁה) [pronounced eesh-SHAW]	<i>woman, wife</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #802 BDB #61
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô' (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced law-KAHKH]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #3947 BDB #542

Translation: And [is there] a man [here] who is betrothed to a woman, but has not [yet] taken her. The third case is a man who is close to getting married, but he has not married his woman yet; he has not yet consummated his marriage.

Here is a man who has become engaged to a woman, yet they have not consummated their marriage nor have they moved in with one another. A man in battle will have his mind on her and not his duty. For that reason alone, he might be killed. The word for *take* is *lâqach* (לָקַח) [pronounced law-KAHKH], and it means, among other things, *to take in marriage*. Strong's #3947 BDB #542. We see in Deut. 24:5 that the period of time this man is exempted from the military is one year. He is given one year during which to make this woman happy.

Clarke explains the ancient tradition: *It was customary among the Jews to contract matrimony, espouse or betroth, and for some considerable time to leave the parties in the houses of their respective parents: when the bridegroom had made proper preparations, then the bride was brought home to his house, and thus the marriage was consummated. The provisions in this verse refer to a case of this kind; for it was deemed an excessive hardship for a person to be obliged to go to battle, where there was a probability of his being slain, who had left a new house unfinished; a newly purchased heritage half tilled; or a wife with whom he had just contracted marriage. Homer represents*

*the case of Protesilaus as very afflicting, who was obliged to go to the Trojan war, leaving his wife in the deepest distress, and his house unfinished.*²³

Deuteronomy 20:7b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hâlak ^e (הלך) [pronounced haw-LAHK ^e]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shûwb (שוב) [pronounced shoo ^b v]	<i>to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect; jussive	Strong's #7725 BDB #996
A jussive expresses the speaker's desire, wish or command. We often add into the translation <i>may</i> or <i>let</i> . ²⁴ The jussive involves only the imperfect form of a verb and may be used in the 2 nd or 3 rd persons (although the latter is the most common).			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced BAH-yith]	<i>house, residence; household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1004 BDB #108

Vv. 5d, 6b and 7b are all identical.

Translation: [Let him go and return to his house,...](#) The officer also allows for him to be excused and to return to his home and to this woman.

Each time before battle, these checks were to be performed in order to exempt some men from military duty.

Deuteronomy 20:7c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
pen (פֶּן) [pronounced pen]	<i>lest, peradventure, or else, in order to prevent, or, so that [plus a negative]</i>	conjunction	Strong's #6435 BDB #814
mûwth (מוֹת) [pronounced mooth]	<i>to die; to perish, to be destroyed; to be put to death; to die prematurely [by neglect of wise moral conduct]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #4191 BDB #559

²³ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Deut. 20:7.

²⁴ This is all taken from *Biblical Hebrew*; by Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, pp. 131, 292.

Deuteronomy 20:7c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
b ^e (ב) [pronounced b ^{eh}]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
mil ^o châmâh (מִלְחָמָה) [pronounced mil-khaw-MAW]	<i>battle, war, fight, fighting; victory; fortune of war</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4421 BDB #536
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural)	Strong's #376 BDB #35
’achêr (אַחֵר) [pronounced ah-KHEHR]	<i>another, following, next; other as well as foreign, alien, strange</i>	adjective/substantive	Strong's #312 BDB #29
lâqach (לָקַח) [pronounced law-KAHKH]	<i>to take, to take away, to take in marriage; to seize</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #3947 BDB #542

Translation: ...so that he does not die in battle and another man take her. Again, the idea is identical. He needs to enjoy his time with his woman and to consummate their marriage first.

In fact, Deut. 24:5 gives this man a year at home with his wife: **When a man is newly married, he shall not go out with the army or be liable for any other public duty. He shall be free at home one year to be happy with his wife whom he has taken.**

Keil and Delitzsch write: *The intention of these instructions was neither to sent away all persons who were unwilling to go into the war, and thus avoid the danger of their interfering with the readiness and courage of the rest of the army in prospect of the battle, nor to spare the lives of those persons to whom life was especially dear; but rather to avoid depriving any member of the covenant nation of his enjoyment of the good things of this life bestowed upon him by the Lord.*²⁵ However, the last reason for exemption was different.

Application: There are three things common to most men: a home, a business of some sort (he might be employed by someone else) and a wife. When a man has all three of these things, along with a family, then he has a clear, unequivocal reason to fight for Israel. Neh. 4:14b **"Don't be afraid of the enemy! Remember the Lord, who is great and glorious, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes!"** (NLT) You fight for these things, but, at the same time, you recognize that God is fighting right along side of you.

Allow me this tangent, if you would. I said that those things are common to most men. You may or may not have your own house, your own wife (or husband) or whatever. God has given us the ability to be content with whatever it is that we have; God has planned out our lives for us. When we make decisions in accordance to His will, we tend to be much happier than when we choose to do that which is against His will for our lives. But God's plan for us takes into consideration all that we are, where we have progressed spiritually, and even, where we will

²⁵ Keil & Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. I, pp. 939–940.

progress to. You may not be ready for a wife or for children (or whatever). Paul never had a wife. He was still happy with his life. God still provides and God still has a perfect plan for your life.

Let me add this additional thought: you cannot do it all. You cannot be a missionary, you cannot work in a soup kitchen, you cannot be an evangelist and, at the same time, have 2.2 children and a house in the suburbs. No one can do it all. God has planned your life for you in particular, which includes His gifts and your service.

One of the areas where you will be attacked is an area where you cannot really do anything. For instance, you may recognize that abortion is wrong; this does not mean that you must adopt 6 children in order to hold that view. You may recognize that food stamp usage in this United States is out of control. That does not mean that, in order for you to have this opinion, you must work for meals on wheels or in a soup kitchen or donate vast quantities of food to a soup kitchen. Again, you cannot do it all. But you can do all that God has for you in His plan.

In the spiritual realm, it plays out this way—you might be made to feel like a 2nd class Christian because you are not a missionary or a pastor or an evangelist; and you do not work around the church cleaning toilets and turning the lights out. No believer is a 2nd class Christian. We all have a unique life before Jesus Christ. God has a unique plan for us which includes things to enjoy (a house, a wife, a job), the capacity to enjoy these things (by means of Bible doctrine); a spiritual gift, and a ministry of some sort. What God has designed for you and your ministry is unique and developed exactly for you. Some of you may work in a soup kitchen; some of you may be involved in prayer, which is intense and lengthy; some of you may be greatly prospered and you essentially support a church or a set of missionaries with your donations; you may adopt several children and teach them about Jesus Christ. Just because you have this ministry, this does not mean that someone else's ministry is inferior; and just because your ministry is less noticeable, does not mean your ministry is inferior. **Now there are different gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different ministries, but the same Lord. And there are different activities, but the same God is active in everyone and everything. A manifestation of the Spirit is given to each person to produce what is beneficial...one and the same Spirit is active in all these, distributing to each one as He wills. For as the body is one and has many parts, and all the parts of that body, though many, are one body--so also is Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free--and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. So the body is not one part but many. If the foot should say, "Because I'm not a hand, I don't belong to the body," in spite of this it still belongs to the body. And if the ear should say, "Because I'm not an eye, I don't belong to the body," in spite of this it still belongs to the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? But now God has placed the parts, each one of them, in the body just as He wanted. And if they were all the same part, where would the body be? Now there are many parts, yet one body. So the eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" nor again the head to the feet, "I don't need you!" On the contrary, all the more, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are necessary. (1Cor. 12:4–7, 11–22; HCSB).** I have certainly not listed all of the various ways in which we serve God in His plan. We are, after all, His servants (2Cor. 6:4); we have been bought with a price (1Cor. 6:20). These facts do not mean that our lives are lives of misery and deprivation. These facts orient us to life. And, as slaves, God must take care of us. He must provide our meals, our home and our clothing—and God has designed our lives to be fulfilling and enjoyable.

And have added the officers to speak unto the people and they have said, "Who [is] the man the fearful one and timid of the heart? He will go and let him return to his house, and not has melted a heart of his brothers as his heart."

Deuteronomy
20:8

And the officers will add to say to the people, and say, "What man [is] fearful and timid of heart? Let him go and return to his house, so that the heart of his brothers will not melt as his heart."

Finally, the officers will say, "Is there any man here who is fearful and has a timid soul? Let him return to his house so that he does not weaken the resolve of his fellow soldiers."

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos	Yet more shall the officers speak to the people, and say, Who is the man who is afraid <u>on account of his sin</u> and whose heart is <u>broken</u> ? Let him go and return to his house, that his brethren be not <u>implicated in his sins</u> , and their heart <u>be broken</u> like his.
Latin Vulgate	After these things are declared they shall add the rest, and shall speak to the people: What man is there that is fearful, and faint hearted? Let him go, and return to his house, lest he make the hearts of his brethren to fear, as he himself is possessed with fear.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And have added the officers to speak unto the people and they have said, "Who [is] the man the fearful one and timid of the heart? He will go and let him return to his house, and not has melted a heart of his brothers as his heart."
Peshitta (Syriac)	And the scribes shall speak further to the people, and they shall say, What man is there who is fearful and fainthearted? Let him return and go to his house, lest his brothers heart faint as well as his heart.
Septuagint (Greek)	And the scribes shall speak further to the people, and say, What man is there that fears, and is cowardly in his heart? Let him go and return to his house, lest he make the heart of his brother fail, as his own.

Significant differences: The targum adds some additional text.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	The officials will continue to address the troops, stating: "Is there anyone here who is afraid and discouraged? He can leave and go back to his house; otherwise, his comrades might lose courage just as he has."
Contemporary English V.	Finally, if any of you are afraid, you may go home. We don't want you to discourage the other soldiers.
Easy English	Then the officers must also say, "Is anyone afraid? Does anyone not feel brave? He must go home. If he does not, he will make other men afraid too."
Easy-to-Read Version	"Those {Levite} officers must also say to the people, 'Is there any man here that has lost his courage and is afraid? He should go back home. Then he will not cause the other soldiers to lose their courage too.'
Good News Bible (TEV)	"The officers will also say to the men, 'Is there any man here who has lost his nerve and is afraid? If so, he is to go home. Otherwise, he will destroy the morale of the others.'
<i>The Message</i>	The officers will then continue, "And is there a man here who is wavering in resolve and afraid? Let him go home right now so that he doesn't infect his fellows with his timidity and cowardly spirit."
New Century Version	Then the officers should also say, "Is anyone here afraid? Has anyone lost his courage? He may go home so that he will not cause others to lose their courage, too."
New Life Bible	Then the leaders will say to the people, 'Is there a man here who is afraid and is weak in heart? Let him go and return to his house so he will not make his brothers' hearts afraid like his heart.'
New Living Translation	"Then the officers will also say, 'Is anyone here afraid or worried? If you are, you may go home before you frighten anyone else.'
The Voice	They'll continue, "Is anyone here afraid or intimidated? You can go back home too! We don't want you to make everyone else as scared as you are!"

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	'And the scribes should also speak to the people and tell them: <i>If there is any man who isn't [brave] and is afraid, he should go home, so his fear doesn't discourage his brothers.</i>
Christian Community Bible	They shall also say: "Is there anyone who is afraid or weakhearted? Let him go home immediately, lest his fear discourage others."
God's Word™	The officers should also tell the troops, "If you are afraid or have lost your courage, you may go home. Then you won't ruin the morale of the other Israelites."
New Advent (Knox) Bible	And when so much is said, let them add this further proclamation: Is there anyone here whose spirits are daunted by terror? Let him go back home, or he will daunt the spirits of his brethren, and make them cowards too.
New American Bible (R.E.)	The officials shall continue to speak to the army: "Is there anyone who is afraid and weakhearted [Jgs 7:3.]? Let him return home, or else he might make the hearts of his fellows melt as his does."
NIRV	The officers will continue, "Is any man afraid? Is anyone scared? Let him go home. Then the other men won't lose hope too."
New Jerusalem Bible	'Finally, the scribes will say to the people: "Is anyone frightened or faint hearted? Let him go home, in case he makes his brothers faint hearted too!"
New Simplified Bible	»The officers will also say to the men: Is there any man here who has lost his nerve and is afraid? If so, he is to go home. Otherwise, he will destroy the morale of the others.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	The officers will speak more to the people, and they will say, "Who is the man fearful and tender in heart? Go and return to the house so his brothers' heart never melts as his heart."
Bible in Basic English	And let the overseers go on to say to the people, If there is any man whose heart is feeble with fear, let him go back to his house before he makes the hearts of his countrymen feeble.
The Expanded Bible	Then the officers [or scribes] should also say, "Is anyone here afraid? Has anyone lost his courage [heart]? He may go home so that he will not cause others to lose their courage, too [melt the hearts of his relatives/brothers like his heart]."
Ferar-Fenton Bible	The Magistrates shall even add to this address to the People, and ask ; - " What man fears with a timid heart ? Let him go and return to his house, and not depress the hearts of his brothers, like his own heart."
NET Bible®	In addition, the officers are to say to the troops, "Who among you is afraid and fainthearted? He may go home so that he will not make his fellow soldier's [Heb "his brother's."] heart as fearful [Heb "melted."] as his own."

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	"The officials will then add to what they have said to the soldiers: 'Is there a man here who is afraid and fainthearted? He should go back home; otherwise his fear may demoralize his comrades as well.'
exeGeses companion Bible	And the officers word again to the people, and say, What man awes, and is tender of heart? Have him go and return to his house, lest the heart of his brothers melt as well as his heart.
Kaplan Translation	The lower officers shall then continue speaking to the people and say, 'Is there any man among you who is afraid or faint-hearted [By nature (Ramban) afraid of weapons (Sotah 44a), and unable to kill (Ibn Ezra, Chizzkuni).]? Let him go home rather than have his cowardliness demoralize his brethren.'
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And what ish is there that hath betrothed an isha, and hath not taken her? Let him go and return unto his bais, lest he die in the milchamah, and another ish take her.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	And the officers shall speak further to the people, and say, What man is fearful and fainthearted? Let him return to his house, lest [because of him] his brethren's [minds and] hearts faint as does his own.
Concordant Literal Version	Then the superintendents will continue to speak to the people and say:Whoever the man be who is fearful and timid of heart may go and return to his house so that the heart of his brothers may not be melted as his own heart is.
English Standard Version	And the officers shall speak further to the people, and say, 'Is there any man who is fearful and fainthearted? Let him go back to his house, lest he make the heart of his fellows melt like his own.'
Green's Literal Translation	And the officers shall speak further to the people, and say, Who is the man who is afraid, and faint of heart? Let him go and return to his house; then the heart of his brothers will not melt like his heart.
New RSV	The officials shall continue to address the troops, saying, 'Is anyone afraid or disheartened? He should go back to his house, or he might cause the heart of his comrades to fail like his own.'
Syndein/Thieme	{Verses 8. Case of Dishonorable Discharge from the Battle - Cowards!} And the officers shall speak further unto the people, and they shall say, "What man is there that is a coward and fearful/fainthearted? Let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren's 'right lobe'/heart/'right lobe' faint as well as his 'right lobe'/heart. {Note: Cowardice is like a communicable disease - one coward encourages cowardice among others.}.
Updated Bible Version 2.11	And the officers will speak further to the people, and they will say, What man is there who is fearful and fainthearted? Let him go and return to his house, lest his brothers' heart melt as his heart.
Young's Updated LT	"And the authorities have added to speak unto the people, and said, Who is the man that is afraid and tender of heart? Let him go and turn back to his house, and the heart of his brothers does not melt like his heart.

The gist of this verse: Cowards were also eliminated from the Israeli army.

Deuteronomy 20:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
yâçaph (יָצַף) [pronounced yaw-SAHPH]	<i>to add, to augment, to continue to do a thing</i>	3 rd person plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3254 BDB #414
shôṭêr (שׁוֹטֵר) [pronounced show-TARE]	<i>official, commissioned officer, officer; this word refers to an official or an officer who is not the highest in command, but holds a subordinate position</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #7860 BDB #1009
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>leh</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510

Deuteronomy 20:8a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
dābar (דָּבַר) [pronounced daw ^b -VAHR]	<i>to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce</i>	Piel infinitive construct	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
'el (אֶל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'am (אָם) [pronounced gahm]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

Translation: *And the officers will add to say to the people,...* There is a change here from the previous 3 exemptions. Now there are officers (plural) who are questioning their men, to determine their courage. This could be a less public forum, where smaller groups of men are spoken to.

Deuteronomy 20:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'āmar (אָמַר) [pronounced aw-MAHR]	<i>to say, to speak, to utter; to say [to oneself], to think; to command; to promise; to explain; to intend</i>	3 rd person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #559 BDB #55
mîy (מִי) [pronounced mee]	<i>who, whom; whose, whomever; what; occasionally rendered how, in what way</i>	pronominal interrogative; the verb <i>to be</i> may be implied	Strong's #4310 BDB #566
'îysh (אִישׁ) [pronounced eesh]	<i>a man, a husband; anyone; a certain one; each, each one, everyone</i>	masculine singular noun (sometimes found where we would use a plural); with the definite article	Strong's #376 BDB #35
yârê' (אֲרֵי) [pronounced yaw-RAY]	<i>who fears, who is afraid; one exhibiting fear-respect, one having reverence [a reverential respect]</i>	Qal active participle; also taken as an adjective; with the definite article	Strong's #3372 (#3373) BDB #431

Deuteronomy 20:8b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
rak ^e (רַךְ) [pronounced <i>rahkh</i>]	<i>tender, delicate, soft; infirm; weak, weak of heart, timid</i>	masculine singular adjective; construct form	Strong's #7390 BDB #940
lêbab (בַּבֵּל) [pronounced <i>lay-BAHB^v</i>]	<i>mind, inner man, inner being, heart</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #3824 BDB #523

Translation: ...and say, "What man [is] fearful and timid of heart? Whereas, there appeared to be only one officer speaking before, there seem to be several officers now making this determination. This suggests that we have gone down in rank, and are now dealing with those officers who might be over ten men or 50. They might be asking this question and looking more carefully at their men, to make this determination.

Deuteronomy 20:8c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
hâlak ^e (הָלַךְ) [pronounced <i>haw-LAHK^e</i>]	<i>to go, to come, to depart, to walk; to advance</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1980 (and #3212) BDB #229
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
shûwb (שׁוּב) [pronounced <i>shoo^bv</i>]	<i>to return, to turn, to turn back, to reminisce, to restore something, to bring back something, to revive, to recover something, to make restitution</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect; jussive	Strong's #7725 BDB #996

A jussive expresses the speaker's desire, wish or command. We often add into the translation *may* or *let*.²⁶ The jussive involves only the imperfect form of a verb and may be used in the 2nd or 3rd persons (although the latter is the most common).

lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bayith (בַּיִת) [pronounced <i>BAH-yith</i>]	<i>house, residence; household, habitation as well as inward</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #1004 BDB #108

Translation: Let him go and return to his house,... The coward, the man who is afraid to go to war, he is also sent back to his home.

This was one of Absalom's many mistakes when he raised up an army to fight against his father David. He was convinced to get a huge army together, and one of the many things he took no notice of is, were any of his men

²⁶ This is all taken from *Biblical Hebrew*; by Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, pp. 131, 292.

cowards? His idea was, the larger the army, the better. David, with a decidedly smaller army, defeated his son in battle, and Absalom's men retreated.

Deuteronomy 20:8d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
lô' (לא or לוּל) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
mâçaç (נָסַח) [pronounced <i>maw-SAUCE</i>]	<i>to be dissolved, to be melted; figuratively to become faint, fearful, to despair; to sorrow, to grieve</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Niphal imperfect	Strong's #4549 BDB #587
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
lêbab (לֵבָב) [pronounced <i>lay-BAHB^v</i>]	<i>mind, inner man, inner being, heart</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3824 BDB #523
'âch (אָח) [pronounced <i>awhk</i>]	<i>brothers, kinsmen, close relatives; tribesmen; fellow-countrymen</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #251 BDB #26
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced <i>k^e</i>]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
lêbab (לֵבָב) [pronounced <i>lay-BAHB^v</i>]	<i>mind, inner man, inner being, heart</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3824 BDB #523

Translation: ...so that the heart of his brothers will not melt as his heart." The concern here is to make certain that the other soldiers are not affected and do not lose their nerve as well.

Melt is the Hiphil perfect of mâçaç (נָסַח) [pronounced *maw-SAUCE*] and it means essentially *to melt* as it is found in Psalm 147:18. The context is He gives snow like wool; He scatters hoarfrost like ashes. He casts forth His ice as fragments; who can stand before His cold? He sends forth His word and melts them (Psalm 147:16–18a). This word is also found in Psalm 6:6 39:11.* Strong's #4529 BDB #587 and is related to but different from Strong's #4549 (also translated *melt* in Ex. 16:21).

McGee wrote: *There might be a man who very frankly says, "I am a coward. I am afraid to fight, and I don't want to fight." So here are four good reasons for a man not to go to war. I could not have used the first three reasons, but that last one I could have used. If a man was afraid, fainthearted, fearful, he was not to go. I believe I would have turned and gone home.²⁷ In American we have had problems with out young men dodging the draft and burning their draft cards. I have great sympathy with many*

²⁷ J. Vernon McGee, *Deuteronomy*, p. 127.

*of these young men, but I wish instead of trying to blame the government and blame everybody else, they would just come out and say they are afraid to go fight. That is a good reason. That would have kept me out of the battle, I can assure you of that. I don't mind admitting I'm a coward.*²⁸

We have an illustration of this exemption in Judges 7:3: “Now therefore come, proclaim in the hearing of the people, saying, ‘Whoever is afraid and trembling, let him return and depart from Mount Gilead.’ “ So 22,000 people returned, but 10,000 remained. Fear and cowardice is catching. When one person fails due to cowardice, this will infect many of those around him. Even though God has promised victory to the Israelites, for some without faith, this is not enough. If they are still terribly apprehensive about going to war, then there is no purpose for them going into battle. At best, they will quietly retreat or be killed while too afraid to do anything. At worst, and the more likely scenario, their fear will infect the hearts of the others.

This certainly recognizes the principle that cowardice can spread throughout a unit. Charley Brown might be a good soldier, but if he looks over and see Linus huddled up and fearful, it affects Charley Brown's resolve.

This should be an easy concept to grasp. As a teacher, I dealt with discipline problems. Now, if I had 1, 2 or 3 problems, I could spread them out, move about the class, look at them, speak to them directly, and do a number of simple things to diffuse their disobedience. However, when that number increases to 5 or more, this become much more difficult to do, and this pulls in other kids to act inappropriately. What other people do, affects those around them. If that number is kept small, it can be dealt with; if that number increases, then the impact on the crowd increases exponentially.

These 4 verses read: Also, an officer will speak to the army, asking, “Is there anyone here who has built a new house, but has not yet begun to enjoy it? Let that man go back and return to his home so that he does not die in battle without having the chance to enjoy his newly-built home. Is there any man here who has recently planted a vineyard, but has not harvest it yet? Let him return to his home so that he does not die in battle and another man enjoy the fruits of his labor. Is there a man here betrothed to a woman, but has not yet consummated the marriage? Let him return to his house so that he does not die another man take her. Finally, the officers will say, “Is there any man here who is fearful and has a timid soul? Let him return to his house so that he does not weaken the resolve of his fellow soldiers.”

Jamieson, Fausset and Brown sum this section up: *Four grounds of exemption are expressly mentioned: (1) The dedication of a new house, which, as in all Oriental countries still, was an important event, and celebrated by festive and religious ceremonies (Neh. 12:27); exemption for a year. (2) The planting of a vineyard. The fruit of the first three years being declared unfit for use, and the first-fruits producible on the fourth, the exemption in this case lasted at least four years. (3) The betrothal of a wife, which was always a considerable time before marriage. It was deemed a great hardship to leave a house unfinished, a new property half cultivated, and a recently contracted marriage; and the exemptions allowed in these cases were founded on the principle that a man's heart being deeply engrossed by something at a distance, he would not be very enthusiastic in the public service. (4) The ground of exemption was cowardice. From the composition of the Israelitish army, which was an irregular militia, all above twenty years being liable to serve, many totally unfit for war must have been called to the field; and it was therefore a prudential arrangement to rid the army of such unwarlike elements—persons who could render no efficient service, and the contagion of whose craven spirit might lead to panic and defeat*²⁹.

McGee: *God say here that He wants His people to know two things before they go to war. First of all, they must be on His side. They must be fighting for what is right and know that God is with them. Secondly, they must be enthusiastic about it. There is a time when one should fight for his country, and there is a place for the flag and for patriotism. The way things are carried out by our politicians*

²⁸ J. Vernon McGee, *Deuteronomy*, p. 128.

²⁹ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*; 1871; from e-sword, Deut. 20:5–8.

actually encourages this motley mob who burn their draft cards. But the way God does it is very wise. He had a marvelous arrangement for His people, even in time of war.³⁰

The removal of troops could be quite remarkable. Gideon began with 32,000 troops and he eliminated 22,000 of them for fear (Judges 7:3). However, then, he sent home 7700 of them for other reasons, leaving behind a relatively small army, which was still victorious over the Midianite army of 135,000 (Judges 7).

In Num. 13–14, Moses was going to take the people into the land (they were only a year or so out of Egypt), and fear so permeated this people that they cried like babies at the thought of invading the land of Canaan (Deut. 1:28). In a situation like this, there was not enough of an army to move forward.

We just spoke about different spiritual gifts. Charley Brown may not have what it takes to go to war; but, he might volunteer with an eye toward providing soldiers with food and other logistics; he might be a medic or a nurse. Such men should not be disparaged simply because they lack battle courage. An army needs logistics; an army needs medical personnel. These are like the various members of the body. You may have a place in the military even if you lack great courage.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

A Strategy Meeting of Military Authorities

And he was as a completion of the officers to speak unto the people and they will number commanders of the armies in a head of the people. Deuteronomy 20:9

When the officers have completed speaking to the people, then they will have personal contact with the commanders of the armies with the head of the people.

When the officers have finished speaking to the people, then they will speak personally to the commanders of the various divisions with the general of the army.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos	And when the officers shall have finished to speak with the people, they <u>shall appoint</u> the captains of the host at the head of the people.
Latin Vulgate	And when the captains of the army shall hold their peace, and have made an end of speaking, <u>every man shall prepare their bands to fight</u> .
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And he was as a completion of the officers to speak unto the people and they will number commanders of the armies in a head of the people.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And when the scribes have made an end of speaking to the people, the commanders of the army <u>shall stand</u> at the head of the people.
Septuagint (Greek)	And it shall come to pass when the scribes shall have ceased speaking to the people, that they <u>shall appoint</u> generals of the army to be leaders of the people.

Significant differences: The meaning of the final verb and understanding the final sentence is difficult for many translators. The nearly literal translation above is probably the most accurate.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

³⁰ J. Vernon McGee, *Deuteronomy*, p. 128.

Common English Bible	Once the officials have completed their speech to the troops, the army commanders will assume leadership of the forces.
Contemporary English V.	When the officials are finished giving these orders, they will appoint officers to be in command of the army.
Easy English	When the officers have finished speaking to the army, they must choose leaders for it.
Easy-to-Read Version	Then, after the officers have finished speaking to the army, they must choose captains to lead the soldiers.
<i>The Message</i>	When the officers have finished speaking to the troops, let them appoint commanders of the troops who shall muster them by units.
New Berkeley Version	When the officers have thus completed their speaking, they shall appoint army captains to lead the people.
New Century Version	When the officers finish speaking to the army, they should appoint commanders to lead it.
New Living Translation	When the officers have finished speaking to their troops, they will appoint the unit commanders.
The Voice	When the officials have finished speaking to the troops, they'll appoint commanders to lead each section of the army.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	'And after the scribes have finished speaking to the people, they must appoint generals over the army to lead them.
Beck's American Translation	When the officers are done talking to the troops, they should appoint commanders to lead them.
Christian Community Bible	When they have finished speaking, commanders shall be put at the head of the people.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	And now, having said their say, let the chieftains keep silent, and let each of them set about marshalling his company for battle.
New American Bible (R.E.)	When the officials have finished speaking to the army, military commanders shall be appointed over them.
NIRV	The officers will finish speaking to the army. When they do, they'll appoint commanders over it.
Revised English Bible	When the officers have finished addressing the army, commanders will assume command.
Today's NIV	When the officers have finished speaking to the army, they shall appoint commanders over it.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	When the officers have finished speaking to the people, they count leaders of the host to head the people.
Bible in Basic English	Then, after saying these words to the people, let the overseers put captains over the army.
The Expanded Bible	When the officers [scribes] finish speaking to the army, they should appoint commanders to lead it.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	And when the Magistrates have ceased speaking to the People, then they should appoint officers to the regiments to command the People. Vv. 10 - 14 of Ch. xxi. should come in. as I now put them, at Ch. xx. v. 9, they having been misplaced into Ch. xx. by some old copier. See also note on Ch. xxi. forward. - F. F.
HCSB	When the officers have finished addressing the army, they will appoint military commanders to lead it.
NET Bible®	Then, when the officers have finished speaking [The Hebrew text includes "to the people," but this phrase has not been included in the translation for stylistic

reasons.], they must appoint unit commanders [Heb "princes of hosts."] to lead the troops.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

exeGesés companion Bible	...- and so be it, when the officers finish wording to the people they muster governors of the hosts to head the people.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	When the officials have finished addressing the troops, army commanders shall assume command of the troops.
Judaica Press Complete T.	And it shall be, that when the officials finish speaking to the people, they shall appoint officers of the legions at the edges of the people.
Kaplan Translation	When the lower offices have finished speaking to the people, then they shall appoint senior officers [Shotrim in Hebrew. See above 1:15.] to lead the people.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And it shall be, when the shoterim have made an end of speaking unto the people that they shall appoint sarei tzaos to lead the people.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And it will come to be when the superintendents have finished speaking to the people that they will commit chiefs of the militia hosts at the head of the people.
Darby Translation	And it shall be, when the officers have ended speaking unto the people, that they shall place captains of the hosts at the head of the people.
English Standard Version	And when the officers have finished speaking to the people, then commanders shall be appointed at the head of the people.
New RSV	When the officials have finished addressing the troops, then the commanders shall take charge of them.
Syndein/Thieme	{Must Be Able to Identify Officers/Authority} And it shall be, when the officers have finished speaking to the people, that they shall make 'a table of organization'/'captains of the armies' to lead the people."
Updated Bible Version 2.11	And it will be, when the officers have made an end of speaking to the people, that they will appoint captains of hosts at the head of the people.
Webster's Bible Translation	And it shall be, when the officers have made an end of speaking to the people, that they shall make captains of the armies to lead the people.
World English Bible	It shall be, when the officers have made an end of speaking to the people, that they shall appoint captains of hosts at the head of the people.
Young's Updated LT	And it has come to pass as the authorities finish to speak unto the people, that they have appointed princes of the hosts at the head of the people.

The gist of this verse: A system of authorities is set up within the army and they have a staff meeting.

Deuteronomy 20:9a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (הַיָּה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224

Deuteronomy 20:9a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Without a specific subject and object, the verb <i>hâyâh</i> often means <i>and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass</i> (with the <i>wâw</i> consecutive). It may be more idiomatically rendered <i>subsequently, afterwards, later on, in the course of time, after which</i> . Generally, the verb does not match the gender whatever nearby noun could be the subject (and, as often, there is no noun nearby which would fulfill the conditions of being a subject).			
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced k ^e]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
kâlâh (הִלָּךְ) [pronounced kaw-LAWH]	<i>to complete, to finish; to prepare; to come to an end; to consume, to waste, to destroy, to annihilate; to make pine away</i>	Piel infinitive construct	Strong's #3615 BDB #477
The infinitive construct with the kaph preposition is very similar to its use with the <i>bêyth</i> preposition. Generally, this is seen as a temporal clause, where the preposition is translated <i>when, as, just as, as soon as</i> . ³¹			
shôṭêr (שׁוֹטֵר) [pronounced show-TARE]	<i>official, commissioned officer, officer; this word refers to an official or an officer who is not the highest in command, but holds a subordinate position</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #7860 BDB #1009
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
dâbar (דָּבַר) [pronounced daw ^b -VAHR]	<i>to speak, to talk [and back with action], to give an opinion, to expound, to make a formal speech, to speak out, to promise, to propose, to speak kindly of, to declare, to proclaim, to announce</i>	Piel infinitive construct	Strong's #1696 BDB #180
'el (אֶל) [pronounced eh]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'am (אָמ) [pronounced gahm]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

Translation: *When the officers have completed speaking to the people,...* The officers have weeded out certain men who are better off returning to their homes—men who are cowards or men who will have their minds on something else entirely. This is better for the army and for Israel that these men are excused.

³¹ *Biblical Hebrew*; by Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, p. 182.

Deuteronomy 20:9b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
pâqad (פָּקַד) [pronounced <i>paw-KAHD</i>]	<i>to go to a person, to visit, to have personal contact with, to sort out, to visit a person, to commit, to charge to the care of, to fall upon, to attack, to number, to take a census</i>	3 rd person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #6485 BDB #823
sar (שָׂר) [pronounced <i>sar</i>]	<i>chieftain, chief, ruler, official, captain, prince, leader, commander</i>	masculine plural construct	Strong's #8269 BDB #978
ts ^e bâ'ôwth (צְבָאוֹת) [pronounced <i>tz^{eb}-vaw-OHTH</i>]	<i>armies, hosts; wars</i>	masculine plural noun, simply the plural of Strong's #6635, but often used in titles	Strong's #6635 BDB #838
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
rô'sh (רֹאשׁ) [pronounced <i>rohsh</i>]	<i>head [of a man, city, state, nation, place, family, priest], top [of a mountain]; chief, prince, officer; front, choicest, best; height [of stars]; sum</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #7218 BDB #910
'am (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766

Translation: ...then they will have personal contact with the commanders of the armies with the head of the people. This is simply a meeting between all of the commanders of the army, including the general. They must develop plans and strategy.

The verb in question here—the one responsible for a myriad of interpretations—is *pâqad* (פָּקַד) [pronounced *paw-KAHD*]. It means *to go to a person, to visit, to have personal contact with, to sort out, to visit a person, to commit, to charge to the care of, to fall upon, to attack, to number, to take a census*. The best understanding of this verb, in most cases, is the British concept of *sorting out* a person or a situation. Often, the former *sorting out* has to do with some sort of animus or problem, but the idea of personal contact is what we take from this. There is personal contact between all parties involved here. Strong's #6485 BDB #823.

At this point, the squads will require squad leaders. Although an army functions as a unit, it is really a unit of several smaller units which is made up of several smaller units. This is the only way war can be fought—with careful organization and levels of authority. The authorities, or commissioned officers, are actual field commanders. This is not a civilian-run army. However, the verb used here does not mean *to appoint*; so that is

not principally what is happening here. There may be some last minute shuffling of the military authorities, but that is not what *pâqad* means.

This would suggest that there might be some last minute changes or appointments of rank. There has to be order, coordination and information among the officers of an army. They cannot simply be pointed in a direction with the command, "Charge." On occasions, some units of an army do just that, but putting together strategy and tactics is key to winning the war. See the **Doctrine of the Military** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)) and **Doctrine of War** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)) ([WPD](#)).

As a young Christian, I had come from a very liberal background. I believed in pretty much all of the liberal doctrine, and actually believed that, by protesting, war could be ended. I had a lot of goofy ideas. When listening to R. B. Thieme, Jr., there were some adjustments which I had to make. There were things which he taught about war and the military which were far too hawkish for my liberal soul, so I had to lay these things aside. What I recognized by his teaching was, he knew what he was talking about and he taught the Word of God verse-by-verse, chapter by chapter. I did not see much of that in the Christian world. I lived in a reasonably good-sized city, and, as a young believer, I set out to find a church where the Word of God was taught verse-by-verse, chapter by chapter, and perhaps by someone who was not so dogmatic and hawkish. What a surprise, that, after going to a half-dozen different churches, I was nowhere close to finding good teaching. All this time, I kept on listening to Bob's teaching, not completely fine with it, but it was the best available.

My point in this is, you might be a new believer and you might have been brought up to believe a whole host of things that are wrong. Now, as a new believer, you need to be willing to set aside what it is that you believe and learn from the Word of God. Many people cannot do that. I have friends of mine who have become believers in Jesus Christ, and they have not changed their thinking over 30 or 40 years time. In about 90% of the people who believe in Jesus Christ, most of what they believe in prior to conversion is wrong. For 100% of new believers, there are some areas in your thinking which are completely wrong. So, when you listen to the teaching of the Word of God, you have to have an open mind. Now, you may not buy into some of what is being said from time to time, and you merely lay that aside. You do not need to react to it; you do not need to become angered by it. You may think, "I understand the war is wrong and many in my generation know that too; so we can literally end war in my generation." People do believe that. I believed that. So when you read about God preparing His people for war, you may hope that is something which is long-time in the past, and not pertinent to you. If you believe that, then set these things aside for a time. But, at some point, you will need to come back to what it is your believe and what the Bible teaches. In every instance, where you disagree with the Word of God, you are wrong and the Bible is correct.

Primarily, what is occurring here is, the various commanders will meet and strategize, because each unit is a part of the whole, and each unit needs to have instructions to follow. Although little is said about David's war with Absalom (actually, Joab was at the head of David's army), I can guarantee you that Joab and his generals and commanders had a variety of meetings to determine how to play their hand. Absalom, not knowing anything about war, probably had not the slightest idea how to organize his army, so his instructions were probably, "Hey ho" as he pointed his sword in the direction of David's army. Joab chose to place and the time of their meeting, and, although Absalom had a numerically larger army, he was soundly defeated by Joab's leadership.

I have read some really weird interpretations of this verse, including the idea that these men were to keep Israel from retreating, and they had hatchets and they stood in the rear of Israel's armies to cut off legs of those who retreated in fear.³² Whether or not some of these people existed and whether there is history to back this up, I could not say (Gill provides one ancient reference). But, what I can say unequivocally is, that is not the proper interpretation of this passage.

Throughout Scripture, there is a great deal of thought given to systems of authorities which are set up. One non-military example is when Moses' father-in-law noticed that Moses was overburdened, the father-in-law suggested

³² Dr. John Gill, *John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible*; from e-Sword, Deut. 20:9.

that Moses appoint some judges to work under him and to take his place. Moses would have been the court of appeal, but this freed up a great deal of Moses time.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Israel is to First Offer Terms of Peace

When you have drawn near unto a city to fight against her, and you have proclaimed unto her to peace. Deuteronomy 20:10 **When you draw near to a city to fight against it, you will proclaim peace unto them [lit., her, it].**

When you come near to a city to war against them, first offer them terms of peace.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos	When you come nigh to a city to make war against it, then you shall send to it certain to invite it to peace;...
Latin Vulgate	If at any time thou come to fight against a city, thou shalt first offer it peace.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	When you have drawn near unto a city to fight against her, and you have proclaimed unto her to peace.
Peshitta (Syriac)	When you come near to a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace to it.
Septuagint (Greek)	And if you shall draw near to a city to overcome them by war, then call them out peaceably.
Significant differences:	None.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	When you approach a city to fight against it, you should first extend peaceful terms to it.
Contemporary English V.	Before you attack a town that is far from your land, offer peace to the people who live there. If they surrender and open their town gates, they will become your slaves. But if they reject your offer of peace and try to fight, surround their town and attack. Then, after the LORD helps you capture it, kill all the men. Take the women and children as slaves and keep the livestock and everything else of value.
Easy English	Before you attack a city, you must do this: Speak in a friendly way to the people who live there.
Easy-to-Read Version	"When you go to attack a city, you must first offer peace to the people there.
Good News Bible (TEV)	"When you go to attack a city, first give its people a chance to surrender.
<i>The Message</i>	When you come up against a city to attack it, call out, "Peace?"
New Living Translation	"When you come near a city to fight against it, ask the people of the city if they would rather have peace.
The Voice	When you first approach a city you're going to fight against, shout out, "Peace!"

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	'Now, whenever you approach a city; before you go to battle against them, you must call out to them peacefully.
Beck's American Translation	"When you come near a town to attack it, call on it not to fight.

God's Word™	When you approach a city to attack it, offer its people a peaceful way to surrender.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	When thou dost lay siege to a city, first of all thou shalt offer terms of peace.
New American Bible (R.E.)	<i>Cities of the Enemy.</i>
NIRV	When you draw near a city to attack it, offer it terms of peace. Suppose you march up to attack a city. Before you attack it, offer peace to its people.
New Jerusalem Bible	'When you advance on a town to attack it, first offer it peace-terms.
New Simplified Bible	»When you go to attack a city, first give its people a chance to surrender.
Today's NIV	When you march up to attack a city, make its people an offer of peace.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	When you near a city to fight it, call peace into it.
The Expanded Bible	When you march up to attack a city, first make them an offer of peace.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	When you approach a city to war against it, you shall propose peace to it ;...
NET Bible®	When you approach a city to wage war against it, offer it terms of peace.
NIV, ©2011	When you march up to attack a city, make its people an offer of peace.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	"When you advance on a town to attack it, first offer it terms for peace.
exeGesés companion Bible	When you approach to a city to fight against it, call shalom to it:...
Hebrew Names Version	When you draw near to a city to fight against it, then proclaim shalom to it..
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	When you approach a town to attack it, you shall offer it terms of peace [Or, "call on it to surrender."].
Kaplan Translation	<i>Taking Captives</i> When you approach a city to wage war against it, you must propose a peaceful settlement.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	When thou comest nigh unto a town to fight against it, then proclaim an offer of shalom unto it.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	When you come near to a city to fight against it then you should call to it for peace.
English Standard Version	"When you draw near to a city to fight against it, offer terms of peace to it.
Green's Literal Translation	When you come near a city to fight against it, then call to it for peace.
NASB	"When you approach a city to fight against it, you shall offer it terms of peace [Lit call to it for peace].
New King James Version	"When you go near a city to fight against it, then proclaim an offer of peace to it.
New RSV	When you draw near to a town to fight against it, offer it terms of peace.
Syndein/Thieme	{Verses 10-20. Siege Procedure in the Jewish Army} When you come near unto a city to fight against it, then offer terms of peace unto it.
Webster's Bible Translation	When thou comest nigh to a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace to it.
Young's Updated LT	"When you draw near unto a city to fight against it, then you have called unto it for Peace.

The gist of this verse: An opportunity for peace must be offered to a city before it is attacked.

Deuteronomy 20:10a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
qârab (בָּרַב) [pronounced <i>kaw-RA^{BV}</i>]	<i>to come near, to approach, to draw near</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong #7126 BDB #897
ʿel (אֶל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
ʾîyr (רֵיעַ) [pronounced <i>ġeer</i>]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #5892 BDB #746
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâcham (לָחַם) [pronounced <i>law-KHAHM</i>]	<i>to engage in battle, to engage in war, to wage war; to fight, to battle</i>	Niphal infinitive construct	Strong's #3898 BDB #535
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced <i>ġahl</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of relative proximity with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

Translation: *When you draw near to a city to fight against it,...* There can be many reasons to go to war. Israel was very often the aggressor in war, and this was with God's blessing. In fact, many times, it was God Who used Israel to deal with a degenerate population. However, that all took place within the boundaries of Canaan. From outside of Canaan, Israel faced many peoples who were antagonistic toward them, and they would often find themselves going to war against a variety of nations (the book of Samuel details many of these wars, some dealing with peoples within the land of Israel, and some from without).

In this example, Israel is fighting against a city outside of Canaan. This will be explicitly explained in subsequent verses, but, for right now, just take my word for it. There could be a number of reasons for this war, however, most of the time, this was a matter of antagonism from external forces. However, Israel is clearly the aggressor in this example. Israel is moving toward a city to fight against it—that is aggressive action.

Application: It is wrong to fight only defensive wars. If this is all a people do, then they have lousy leaders. Leaders should be able to determine when there are antagonisms building up, and what should be done about it. They should not be surprised and shocked by an attack from an enemy force. And good leadership ought to be able to prepare its army and be aggressive if need be.

Generally speaking, Israel was not a bully. They did not expand their territory by choosing a plot of land and deciding, "We want this, so let's take it by force." They did take the land in Canaan by force, and that was by order of God. However, we have several instances of Israel being stronger than a people and maintaining peace with them. In 1Sam. 23, David sends his parents to Moab for protection. David remains quite friendly with Moab and with Ammon until they turn against him. At that point, David shows no mercy. There is a small country right on the outskirts of Israel known as Maacah. David marries a daughter of the king of Maacah, thus forming an alliance by marriage. The Gibeonites, a people within Israel, tricked Joshua into making a treaty with them, and this treaty was respected for many generations. My point in all of this is, Israel attacked the people whom God told them to

attack; but, generally speaking, Israel was not an aggressive nation. The wars during the time of David were unavoidable; however, these many wars established peace for the reign of Solomon.

Deuteronomy 20:10b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
qârâ' (קָרָא) [pronounced <i>kaw-RAW</i>]	<i>to call, to proclaim, to read, to call to, to call out to, to assemble, to summon; to call, to name [when followed by a lâmed]</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #7121 BDB #894
'el (אֶל) [pronounced <i>ehl</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied) with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #413 BDB #39
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
shâlôwm (שָׁלוֹם) or shâlôm (שָׁלֵם) [pronounced <i>shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>completeness, soundness, health and welfare, peace, prosperity, safe, secure, tranquil, undisturbed, unagitated</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7965 BDB #1022

Translation: ...you will proclaim peace unto them [lit., *her, it*]. Israel would have developed a reputation, although, at times in their history, that reputation would be mixed. However, a nation or city-state needed to ask themselves, "Do I really want to go to war against a nation which has such a close relationship to God?" The people would all know about Israel and its war record. They would all know about its relationship to God. They would all know about Egypt.

Do you really want to go to war against God?

Obviously, it is an unfair fight when the Israelites approach with God as their commanding general. And many look back at the Old Testament as a time of great barbarism. However, those cities which Israel were to rise up against were given first an opportunity to surrender. Why would another city surrender? It would recognize that the God of the Universe, Y^ehowah, was the God of Israel. This indicates positive volition in their land and they would therefore have the opportunity to believe in Jesus Christ. Furthermore, they could also avoid being destroyed in battle by surrendering. Obviously, a people who did not believe in Y^ehowah, the God of Israel, would stand firm in their opposition to Israel.

There are times when warfare might be imminent, but unnecessary. Our Lord said, as an illustration: "Or what king, when he sets out to meet another king in battle, will not first sit down and take counsel whether he is strong enough with ten thousand to encounter the one coming against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is still far away, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace." (Luke 14:31–32).

We our ourselves at enmity with God, yet He calls to us with the word *peace*. We choose to remain as enemies of Him or with take His offer of peace. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we will be delivered in His life (Rom. 5:10). Now all things are

from God, Who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself (2Cor. 5:18–19a). But now, in Christ Jesus you who then were afar off, came to be near by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, He making us both one, and breaking down the middle wall of partition, in His flesh causing to cease the enmity, the Law of the commandments in decrees, that He might in Himself create the two into one new man, making peace, and might reconcile both in one body to God through the cross, slaying the enmity in Himself. And coming, He proclaimed "peace to you, the ones afar off, and to the ones near." (Eph. 2:13–17; Isa. 57:19 Green’s Literal translation). In this way, this passage is illustrative of our relationship to God. We are at enmity with Him and we deserve to be destroyed. Our nature is incompatible with God’s nature. However, God offers us terms of peace; all we have to do is surrender to Him (which is having faith in His Son, Jesus Christ). That short instance of faith changes everything, and puts us into union with Jesus Christ.

Although these are real instructions for real wars, there is also another meaning that we can derive from this.

God Offers Us Peace, Just as Israel Was to Offer Terms of Peace

Enemies under the economy of Israel	Believers under the economy of the Risen Christ
There would be cities of people who are at enmity with Israel.	As human beings, we are naturally at enmity with God. We have a sin nature; we have been imputed with Adam’s original sin; and we have all committed personal sins. Psalm 51:5 Rom. 3:23 5:12 1Cor. 15:22
As a result, such people deserve death.	We deserve death in the hands of a righteous God. Ezek. 18:4 Prov. 10:16 Rom. 1:32 6:23 7:5 Gal. 6:7
However, God, through Moses, tells the people to offer them terms of peace.	God calls the gospel of Jesus Christ to us, offering us terms of peace with Him. Acts 10:36 Rom. 6:23 Eph. 2:14–17 Heb. 13:20 2Peter 3:14
If those in the city accepted those terms of peace, they became enslaved to Israel.	If we accept God’s terms of peace, by believing in Jesus Christ, we become His slaves. Acts 16:17 1Cor. 3:5 4:1 Philip. 1:1

The number of parallels in the Bible is remarkable. However, so that there is no misunderstanding, Moses here is telling his people exactly what to do. This was not understood by them in any other way. However, for us in the Church Age, we can understand both what Moses told his people to do and how this is parallel to God calling to us through His Son, offering us terms of peace.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

One has to keep in mind that, God did send Israel against seven nations because of their great degeneracy. One certainly would ask then, “Was Israel supposed to stop and ask them if they wanted peace?” My assumption here would be, if a city-state has reached the point where God wants them destroyed, coming to them with terms of peace would not work in the first place.

Clarke explains why this applied to people outside of Canaan: *God, who knows all things, saw that they were incurable in their idolatry; that the cup of their iniquity was full; and as their Creator, Sovereign, and Judge, he determined to destroy them from off the face of the earth, “lest they should teach the Israelites to do after all their abominations.” (Deut. 20:18).*³³

Some people may object and say, “What about this or that family who is open to the God of Israel? Why should they be destroyed in this attack?” This is not difficult to understand. God knows the hearts of all men. God knows who to pardon and who to put under the sword. When Joshua was going to devote the entire city of Jericho to

³³ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Deut. 20:10.

God (meaning that *everyone* was to be killed), still, Rahab the prostitute and her family were preserved. So God knows. As a result, those who were willing to believe in Him were preserved from the sword.³⁴

And he was if peace she answers you and she has opened up to you and he was all the people, those found in her, they are to you to tribute [or, labor] and they have served you.

Deuteronomy
20:11

And it is, if the city [lit., she] answers you "Peace;" and it opens up [its gates] to you, and it will be [that] all the people, those found in it, they are tribute [and labor] for you and they will serve you.

And if the city replies, "We would like peace with you"; and they open up their gates to you, then all of the people in that city will become tribute and labor to you and they will serve you.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos	...and if they answer you with words of peace, and open <u>their gates</u> to you, all the people whom you find therein shall be tributaries, and serve you.
Jerusalem targum	And if it answer you with words of peace, and open <u>the gates</u> to you, all the people whom you find.] <u>But if they will not make peace, but war, with you, then you will beleaguer it.</u>
Latin Vulgate	If they receive it, and open the gates to you, all the people that are therein, will be saved, and will serve you paying tribute.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And he was if peace she answers you and she has opened up to you and he was all the people, those found in her, they are to you to tribute [or, labor] and they have served you.
Peshitta (Syriac)	And if the <u>city</u> give you answer of peace, and it open to you, then all the people who are found in it shall be servants and tributaries to you, and they shall serve you.
Septuagint (Greek)	If then they should answer peaceably to you, and open to you, it shall be that all the people found in it shall be tributary and subject to you.
Significant differences:	There is a <i>time-marker</i> in the Hebrew at the beginning of this verse and in the middle which is not found in the other ancient languages. There are no words for <i>city</i> and <i>gates</i> in the original Hebrew; but it is not wrong to insert them as seen above.

The Jerusalem targum adds an additional sentence.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	If the city responds with peaceful terms and surrenders to you, then all the people in the city will serve you as forced laborers.
Contemporary English V. Easy English	If they surrender and open their town gates, they will become your slaves. Perhaps they may open the gates and let you come in. Then you must make all the people work hard for you, like slaves.
Easy-to-Read Version	If they accept your offer and open their gates, then all the people in that city will become your slaves and be forced to work for you.
<i>The Message</i>	If they answer, "Yes, peace!" and open the city to you, then everyone found there will be conscripted as forced laborers and work for you.

³⁴ This is an oversimplification. There certainly may have been times when, an enemy soldier changed his mind about the God of Israel in the final hours of his life, knowing that all was lost. Such a one may have been killed in battle, but he will spend eternity with God.

New Berkeley Version	If there is peaceful response and they open its gates to you, all the people found there shall render you tribute service and shall be your subjects.
The Voice	If they shout back, "Peace!" and open <i>their gates</i> to you, then you <i>must let them surrender</i> . Make everyone in the city your slaves, and put them to work for you.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	And if they answer you peacefully and open [their gates] to you, all the people who are found there must become your subjects and serve you.
Christian Community Bible	If it accepts your proposal and opens the gates to you, all the people found in it shall become your slaves and serve you.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	If these are accepted, and the gates opened to thee, the lives of all the citizens shall be spared, and they shall become thy subjects, paying thee tribute.
New American Bible (R.E.)	If it agrees to your terms of peace and lets you in, all the people to be found in it shall serve you in forced labor.
NIRV	Suppose they accept your offer and open their gates. Then force all of the people in the city to be your slaves. They will have to work for you.
New Jerusalem Bible	If it accepts these and opens its gates to you, all the people inside will owe you forced labour and work for you.
Revised English Bible	If the offer is accepted and the town opens its gates to you, then all the people who live there are to be put to forced labor and work for you.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	If it answers with peace and is open to you, have them serve you by a draft from all the people found in it.
Bible in Basic English	And if it gives you back an answer of peace, opening its doors to you, then all the people in it may be put to forced work as your servants.
The Expanded Bible	If they accept your offer and open their gates to you, all the people of that city will become your slaves and work for you [serve you in forced labor].
Ferar-Fenton Bible	...and if they will adopt peace, and open to you, then all the people found in it shall be subject to you, and serve you.
HCSB	If it accepts your offer of peace and opens <i>its</i> gates to you, all the people found in it will become forced laborers for you and serve you.
NET Bible®	If it accepts your terms [Heb "if it answers you peace."] and submits to you, all the people found in it will become your slaves [Heb "become as a vassal and will serve you." The Hebrew term translated slaves (<i>no</i> , <i>mas</i>) refers either to Israelites who were pressed into civil service, especially under Solomon (1 Kgs 5:27; 9:15, 21; 12:18), or (as here) to foreigners forced as prisoners of war to become slaves to Israel. The Gibeonites exemplify this type of servitude (Josh 9:3-27; cf. Josh 16:10; 17:13; Judg 1:28, 30-35; Isa 31:8; Lam 1:1).].
NIV, ©2011	If they accept and open their gates, all the people in it shall be subject to forced labor and shall work for you.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	If it accepts the terms for peace and opens its gates to you, then all the people there are to be put to forced labor and work for you.
exeGeses companion Bible	...and so be it, if it answers you of shalom and opens to you, then so be it, all the people found therein become your vassals and serve you.

JPS (Tanakh—1985)	And it will be, if it responds to you with peace, and it opens up to you, then it will be, <i>that</i> all the people found therein shall become tributary to you, and they shall serve you.
Kaplan Translation	If [the city] responds peacefully and opens [its gates] to you, all the people inside shall become your subjects and serve you.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	And it shall be, if it make thee answer of shalom, and open unto thee, then it shall be, that kol haAm that is found therein shall be servants, placed under tribute unto thee, and they shall serve thee.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	“And it shall be that if it accepts your call for peace, and shall open to you, then all the people found in it are to be your compulsory labour, and serve you.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	And it will come to be if it should answer you with peace, and it opens up to you, then it will come to be that all the people who are being found in it shall become tributary to you, and they will serve you.
Context Group Version	And it shall be, if it answers peace to you, and opens to you, then it shall be, that all the people that are found in it shall become slave labor to you, and shall serve you.
English Standard Version	And if it responds to you peaceably and it opens to you, then all the people who are found in it shall do forced labor for you and shall serve you.
The updated Geneva Bible	And it will be, if it make you answer of e peace [If it accept peace.], and open unto you, then it will be, [that] all the people [that is] found therein will be tributaries unto you, and they will serve you.
Green’s Literal Translation	And it shall be, if it answers peace to you, and shall open to you, then it shall be that all the people found in it shall be forced laborers for you, and shall serve you.
New King James Version	And it shall be that if they accept your offer of peace, and open to you, then all the people who are found in it shall be placed under tribute to you, and serve you.
New RSV	If it accepts your terms of peace and surrenders to you, then all the people in it shall serve you in forced labour.
Syndein/Thieme	And it shall be, if it responds peaceably and lets you in, all the people present there shall serve you at forced labor.
World English Bible	It shall be, if it make you answer of peace, and open to you, then it shall be, that all the people who are found therein shall become tributary to you, and shall serve you.
Young’s Updated LT	And it has been, if Peace it answer you, and has opened to you, then it has come to pass—all the people who are found in it are to you for tributaries, and have served you.

The gist of this verse: If the city accepts the terms of peace, then they will become slaves to the Jews.

Deuteronomy 20:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong’s # BDB #251
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong’s #1961 BDB #224

Deuteronomy 20:11a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Without a specific subject and object, the verb <i>hâyâh</i> often means <i>and it will come to be, and it will come to pass, then it came to pass</i> (with the <i>wâw</i> consecutive). It may be more idiomatically rendered <i>subsequently, afterwards, later on, in the course of time, after which</i> . Generally, the verb does not match the gender whatever nearby noun could be the subject (and, as often, there is no noun nearby which would fulfill the conditions of being a subject).			
ʾîm (אִם) [pronounced <i>eem</i>]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when</i> (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49
shâlôwm (שְׁלוֹם) or shâlôm (שָׁלוֹם) [pronounced <i>shaw-LOHM</i>]	<i>completeness, soundness, health and welfare, peace, prosperity, safe, secure, tranquil, undisturbed, unagitated</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #7965 BDB #1022
ʿânâh (אָנָה) [pronounced <i>gaw-NAWH</i>]	<i>to answer, to respond; to speak loudly, to speak up [in a public forum]; to testify; to sing, to chant, to sing responsively</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal imperfect with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6030 BDB #772

Translation: *And it is, if the city [lit., she] answers you “Peace;”...* There are two responses from a city facing a war with Israel—they can make peace with Israel or they can go to war against Israel. So, first, Moses examines what to do if they accept the terms of peace. Vv. 12–14 will be what Israel will do if the city chooses war instead.

Deuteronomy 20:11b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple <i>wâw</i> conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
pâthach (פָּתַח) [pronounced <i>paw-THAHKH</i>]	<i>to open, to open up; to let loose [as in, to draw (a sword)]; to begin, to lead in</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6605 BDB #834 (& #836)
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: *...and it opens up [its gates] to you,...* This is a sign of submission to an outside army. The gates are designed to keep enemy soldiers out. They will be well guarded and well fortified. So, if they are just opened up, the city is giving up to Israel.

Deuteronomy 20:11c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'am (עַם) [pronounced <i>gahm</i>]	<i>people; race, tribe; family, relatives; citizens, common people; companions, servants; entire human race; herd [of animals]</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the definite article	Strong's #5971 BDB #766
mâtsâ' (מַצְאָה) [pronounced <i>maw-TSAW</i>]	<i>those acquired, those found, those present</i>	Niphal participle with the definite article	Strong's #4672 BDB #592
b ^e (בְּ) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #88
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal imperfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
lâmed (לְ) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâmed (לְ) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
maç (מַחֵ) [pronounced <i>mahç</i>]	<i>tribute, tribute rendered by labor or servile work; laborers, task-workers, labor-group, serfdom; to be liable for servile work [to be pressed into servitude]</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4522 BDB #586

Gesenius is fairly dogmatic that this simply refers to tribute; BDB lists *servile work, laborer* as its primary meaning.

Translation: ...and it will be [that] all the people, those found in it, they are tribute [and labor] for you... All the people in that city become either taxable or slaves to Israel.

A body of forced laborers is one word: maç (מַחֵ) [pronounced *mahç*] and it means that or *laborers, task-workers, labor-group, serfdom*. The use of this word in Ex. 1:11 indicates that this is more than just being tributaries (although, that would be at the discretion of Israel). Strong's #4522 BDB #586. This is how much the city had

to recognize that Y^ehowah was the God of the Universe: they had to be willing to present themselves as slaves to Israel.

There are consequences to being at odds with the Israelites. You do not get to oppose God's people without consequence.

Application: This is very difficult for young Americans to understand, because of two Satanic concepts (1) no judgment and (2) no consequences. First of all, I want you to consider Satan and the fallen angels. Do you see how these approaches to life are exactly what they want? They do not want to be judged and they do not want consequences for their actions; and therefore, these approaches to life have become mainstays in modern-day humanism. Let's say that a young female person sleeps around and gets pregnant. Obviously, there should be some judgment here—by her parents, who are in charge of raising her and by her school, which, standing in for society, knows that this is a bad route for young people to take. In the past, many schools separated these girls from the rest of the students, which made a lot of sense. More recently, under the no-judgment, no-consequences approach, many girls remain in their schools, which can certainly have a negative impact on other female students.

Application: Along the same lines, when it comes to *no consequences*, the young woman is then offered an abortion (which is incorrectly seen as *no consequences*); and, in a significant number of cases, this young girl who has the child will now get welfare benefits, which may even include housing. So, she is rewarded for her bad judgment. This is all done under the guise of providing food for the children.

Application: There are times for you to make judgments in life. Some things are wrong to do. Furthermore, a parent has to judge what is going on in the life of his or her children and the child needs to have enough discernment (judgment) to figure out which kids to hang around and which kids to avoid.

Application: When Jesus said, “Do not judge, lest you be judged;” this referred to haughty, self-righteous judgment, passed against others, in such a way to declare moral superiority. An employer must make discerning decisions about who he hires; and parent must make judgments as to how to raise his or her child and when and how much to come down on them; and the child must make judgments daily about what he does, where he goes and who he hangs with. To assert that employers, parents or students should not be discerning in these areas is to completely misinterpret what Jesus was saying.

Application: Therefore, it is wrong when a nation takes a position of animus toward Israel. It should not be difficult for most people to examine the Israeli-Palestinian situation and to *judge* that Israel is right and the Palestinians are wrong. For taking that unwise position, Palestinians will face negative consequences. When a nation gets on the wrong side of this, they will face consequences as well for their bad judgment.

“They allow themselves to be put into slavery, and that is peace to them?” you may ask.

Does this appear harsh to you?

1. There are a great many differences in the ancient world from today's world, at least to us in the United States.
 2. It appears as if Israel is simply picking out one city, putting its army at the front door and saying, “Peace or we come in there and destroy you.” However, that is not necessarily what is occurring here.
 3. Israel developed many alliances throughout the years. King David had a good alliance with Moab until they turned against him. One of David's wives was the daughter of a king in a nearby kingdom which was much smaller than Israel. Obviously, David could have easily conquered this country and kept any woman that he wanted for himself. He chose peace instead; and there is no indication of their servitude to Israel. My point being is, animus between another country and Israel was usually a matter of choice by the other country.
 4. So, this scenario presupposes a good reason for Israel to go to war against this city—perhaps they were aggressive toward Israel; perhaps they even attacked Israel or an Israeli citizen. This situation assumes that there is a reason for there to be aggression between Israel and this city.
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Does this appear harsh to you?

5. For another nation to take a position in opposition to Israel is a mistake in their judgment, and they will pay for that misjudgment. There are consequences to making a bad decision.
6. Assuming that there is a reason for this aggression on Israel's part (the Israelis have never been, as a people, an aggressive or violent people)¹, then Israel is required to first offer them terms of peace.
7. These terms can be rather open ended. It was common for a country to take tribute from other countries; and, to some extent, this was protection money.
8. Here, there appears to be the option of taking these people into slavery. Again, depending upon the reasons for the animosity, that would be a factor in determining how Israel would treat this situation.
9. The Ammonites offered peace to one Jewish city, and their terms were, to put out the right eye of every citizen in that city, and then to make them slaves (1Sam. 11:1–3).
10. My assumption would be, there is a high animosity factor in order for Israel to go to war.
11. A country at enmity with Israel would also be at enmity with their God. This is key. When a person chooses to reject the God of Israel, this is a problem for them—not for Israel.
12. When you touch a hot stove and you burn yourself, that is not harsh. When you jump off a one-story building and break your leg, that is not a harsh judgment, that is simply a normal reaction.
13. Therefore, cities and countries which choose to go against Israel have to face the natural consequences of their actions.

Today, if modern-day Israel is forced into war with any of its neighbors, it is reasonable for Israel to seize their property as spoils for such a war.

¹ Being well-armed and ready to fight back does not make a people aggressive or violent. When Israel took the land of promise, this was by order of God. As we see in the study of Israel's history, there were many incidents where Israel was not completely on board with God's directives.

God is not speaking into the ear of any president, prime minister or general today. This does not mean that we do not know enough about when to go to war and when not to. That requires a knowledge of Bible doctrine as well as a **personal sense of destiny**.

Application: Although George W. Bush was an honorable man who did what he believed was right, he made a dramatic miscalculation when it came to Afghanistan and Iraq—he believed that the key to a better life for the people there would be *democracy*. This was quite unfortunate, as Bush was one of the better-read presidents (whatever goofy prejudices you have about him, you need to lay them aside right now). And he was a very moral, Christian president. But, what he did not get is, Christianity—a relationship to God through Jesus Christ—is what these nations needed. They needed missionaries not a better political system. They needed Bibles, not a better constitution. When our military began discouraging the soldiers sharing their faith in these countries, that was the beginning of the end. Whereas, General MacArthur called for Bibles and missionaries, George Bush called for a better political system. So, what George W. Bush began to do was right and just; however, his follow through was completely wrong. Here is where he needed more Bible doctrine than a knowledge of world history taught mostly by left-leaning historians. This is a miscalculation which resulted in some hard to the United States and to the nations of Iraq and Afghanistan. Although we made things better for a time, our impact on those nations will be much less important than our impact on Japan, South Korea and the Philippines.

As an aside, politics and world events are excellent places to illustrate Bible doctrine. The idea is to take some things which Moses is saying to his people, 3500 years ago, and bring those things up to date. This is why, from time to time, I make reference to current or recent political or historical events. The Bible is a book for all time.

Deuteronomy 20:11d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʿâbad (עָבַד) [pronounced <i>gaw^b-VAHD</i>]	<i>to work, to serve, to labor; to be a slave to</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Qal perfect with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5647 BDB #712

Translation: ...and they will serve you. Although there is some discussion about the meaning of the previous word used, there is no problem understanding what this word means. The people are to be made servants, as per the decree of Moses.

We have a situation which was almost like this. There was a revolt which was pretty much spearheaded by Sheba ben Bichri—Joab halted a total destruction of the city where Sheba ben Bichri was when his head was tossed over the wall (2Sam. 20:10–23). When Moses and the Israelites were traveling through the wilderness to the land of Promise, they often would ask permission to route themselves through a given nation (e.g., Deut. 2:26–28). Israel was only openly hostile to those who were hostile to them or to those God had chosen for destruction. See also 2Kings 6:19–23).

This is ideally our expected service—to be slaves to the Living God, Jesus Christ. As Paul began some of his letters: **Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons** (Philip. 1:1). We have two responses to the demands of God in our lives: we can surrender or we can fight. It should be obvious to any one of us that the resist God is fruitless. The only reason that God does not kill us immediately for our rebellion is that we are either kept alive as a matter of grace or He keeps us alive as an example to others. **Therefore, I urge you, family of God, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies [as] a living and holy sacrifice acceptable to God—your spiritual service of worship** (Rom. 12:1).

However, let's get back to the reality of this situation. The Jews were to offer peace to a city, and if they accepted this peace, this meant that they must submit themselves as slaves to the Jews. They did not just co-exist; they did not just pay tribute; they became Israel's slaves. There was no way God would allow these men to continue in their Satanic worship, which is exactly what they would do if they were given the option of co-existing with the Jews.

Slavery interlude: I want you to think back to the slavery which took place in the United States and try to think about it apart from simply being an inhuman imposition. God brought these men and women from Africa—and God chose these men and women personally. Now, it is quite obvious, like other men, they were hard-headed and not easily converted. Slavery gave them a humility—a forced humility—so that a huge number of slaves became believers in Jesus Christ. Many of the masters who owned these slaves realized that this was their missionary field, and they evangelized their slaves. God expected no less from the Jews.

In our own country, one of the results of slavery was, there were many, many generations of men who were previously Africans, who heard the gospel when under forced humility, and they responded to the call of Jesus Christ; and they believed in Jesus Christ. The depth of their faith was passed on from generation to generation; and their music reflected their deep faith in Jesus Christ (slaves passed along music that they themselves wrote, called spirituals and called gospel music).

God knew the hearts of these slaves—former freedmen in Africa; God knew how negative they were but how positive that they would become with some enforced humility (or, to be more accurate, extreme enforced humility).

You may think that slavery is the worst thing that men can do to one another, but it was through slavery in the United States that millions of men from Africa were saved, throughout dozens of generations, even to today. These millions of men and women are now face to face with Jesus Christ because of the institution of slavery.

God is able to take something which we find abhorrent—slavery (which was not necessarily that abhorrent in the time of Israel)—and turn it into something wonderful. Millions of former Africans and descendants of Africans are now face to face with Jesus Christ because they were brought to America as slaves and evangelized. Furthermore, there are millions of rich Black businessmen who have become successful because they live in the United States; because their ancestors were slaves brought to America.

It is also important for believers in the United States to recognize that a part of our own spiritual heritage is based upon the strength and the power of the Black church, from slavery on to this moment. Because of these churches, the United States as a country enjoyed a great deal of blessing. So, not only were the people from Africa (and their descendants) blessed in being forcefully taken into slavery; but the United States was, in turn, blessed by having them here in our country. This is a wonderful illustration of Rom. 8:28 **And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.** (NIV) God took a very ugly reality—slavery—and turned it all into blessing, for those subjected to slavery, for their descendants, and for the United States as a country.

Of course, there are those who choose to play the victim, and they will eternally blame slavery and prejudice for their lives (even when they are successful in life), but that is a personal shortcoming.

What we do not find here is a specific mention of evangelizing those of the city who agree to become slaves to Israel. We rarely see evangelization in the Old Testament as we have in the New Testament. The disciples were given the mandate to go out to all the people and to tell them all about Jesus Christ; but we do not find similar mandates for the Jews.

For those who agreed to be slaves to the Jews, they would do this first out of fear, knowing that the God of the Jews was greater than their own gods; knowing that the Jews would destroy them and their families and their city if they did not surrender. Eventually, in becoming a part of Jewish society, even as slaves, these people would be exposed to the sacrifices made to God, and, at some point, God the Holy Spirit would make the gospel real to them—probably through observing or offering up a sacrifice—and they would believe in Jesus Christ (or, in the God of the Jews).

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The Spoils of War

And if she does not make peace with you and she has made with you war, and you have besieged against her. And has given her Deuteronomy 20:12–13 **Y^ehowah your Elohim into your hand and you have struck down every male to a mouth of a sword.**

But if the city [lit., she] does not make peace with you, and [instead] has made war with you, you will besiege it and Y^ehowah your Elohim will give it into your hand. You will strike down every male with the mouth of the sword.

However, if the city does not agree to your terms of peace, and they choose to go to war with you instead, then you will besiege it and Jehovah your God will give the city into your hand. You will kill every male in the city with the sword.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos	And when the Lord your God will have delivered it into your hand, then may you smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword.
Latin Vulgate	But if they will not make peace, and will begin war against you, you will besiege it. And when the Lord your God will deliver it into your hands, you will slay all that are therein of the male sex, with the edge of the sword,...
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	And if she does not make peace with you and she has made with you war, and you have besieged against her. And has given her Y ^e howah your Elohim into your hand and you have struck down every male to a mouth of a sword.
Peshitta (Syriac)	But if it will not surrender to you, but will make war with you, then you shall besiege it; And when the LORD your God has delivered it into your hands, you shall slay all its males with the edge of the sword;...
Septuagint (Greek)	But if they will not <u>hearken</u> to you, but wage war against you, you shall besiege it; until the Lord your God shall deliver it into your hands, and you shall strike every male in it with the edge of the sword;...
Significant differences:	Maybe I missed a sentence in the targum? The Greek has <i>hearken</i> rather than <i>to make peace</i> .

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	However, if the city does not negotiate peacefully with you but makes war against you, you may attack it. The LORD your God will hand it over to you; you must kill all the city's males with the sword.
Contemporary English V.	But if they reject your offer of peace and try to fight, surround their town and attack. Then, after the LORD helps you capture it, kill all the men.
Easy English	But they may refuse to listen to you. They may even begin to fight you. Then you must fight against that city. When the *Lord your God gives it to you, you must kill all the men there.
Easy-to-Read Version	But if the city refuses to make peace with you and fights against you, then you should surround the city. And when the Lord your God lets you take the city, you must kill all the men in it.
Good News Bible (TEV)	But if the people of that city will not surrender, but choose to fight, surround it with your army. Then, when the LORD your God lets you capture the city, kill every man in it.
<i>The Message</i>	But if they don't settle for peace and insist on war, then go ahead and attack. GOD, your God, will give them to you. Kill all the men with your swords.
New Berkeley Version	However, if the city declines to make peace and proffers war, then you must lay siege to it, and the LORD your God will give it into your hands, and you shall put every male in it to the sword;...
New Century Version	But if they do not make peace with you and fight you in battle, you should surround that city. The Lord your God will give it to you. Then kill all the men with your swords, and you may take everything else in the city for yourselves. Take the women, children, and animals, and you may use these things the Lord your God gives you from your enemies. V. 14 is included for context.
New Life Bible	But if they do not make peace with you and fight against you, you must take the city in battle. When the Lord your God gives the city to you, you must kill all the men in it with the sword.
New Living Translation	But if they refuse to make peace and prepare to fight, you must attack the town. When the Lord your God hands the town over to you, use your swords to kill every man in the town.

The Voice But if the city doesn't surrender, if it resists you instead, then lay siege to it. When the Eternal your God enables you to capture the city, kill all the men who are left in it with your swords.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	But if they don't listen to you and they choose to fight a war against you; then you must [lay siege on the city] until Jehovah your God gives it into your hands, and you must kill all the men there with swords.
Beck's American Translation	If it submits peacefully and opens its gates to you, then all the people found there should be made your slaves and should serve you. If it will not submit peacefully to you but fights against you, then besiege it. When the LORD your God puts it in your hands, kill every male in it with the sword, but the women and children, the cattle and everything else in the town, all its goods, take as your spoils, and live on your enemies' goods that the LORD your God gives you. Vv. 11 and 14 are included for context.
God's Word™	If they won't accept your offer of peace but declare war on you, set up a blockade around the city. When the LORD your God hands the city over to you, kill every man in that city with your swords.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	But if they refuse to listen, and offer battle, go forward to the assault; and when the Lord makes thee master of it, put only the men folk to the sword, not the women and children, not the cattle or anything else that the city contains. Divide the spoil among the host, and enjoy as thou wilt all the plunder the Lord thy God has allowed thee to take from thy enemies. V. 14 is included for context.
NIRV	But suppose they refuse your offer of peace and prepare for battle. Then surround that city. Get ready to attack it. The Lord your God will hand it over to you. When he does, kill all of the men with your swords.
New Jerusalem Bible	But if it refuses peace and gives battle, you must besiege it. Yahweh your God having handed it over to you, you will put the whole male population to the sword.
New Simplified Bible	»If the people of that city choose to fight and will not surrender, surround it with your army. »When Jehovah your God lets you capture the city, kill every man in it.
Today's NIV	If they refuse to make peace and they engage you in battle, lay siege to that city. When the LORD your God delivers it into your hand, put to the sword all the men in it.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	If however it will not make peace with you, but war, then let it be shut in on all sides: And when the Lord your God has given it into your hands, let every male in it be put to death without mercy.
The Expanded Bible	¹² But if they do not make peace with you and fight you in battle, you should ·surround [besiege] that city. ¹³ The Lord your God will give it ·to you [·into your hands]. Then ·kill [·strike] all the men with your swords, ¹⁴ and you may take ·everything else [all the plunder] in the city for yourselves. Take the women, children, and animals, and you may use ·these things [the plunder] the Lord your God gives you from your enemies. V. 14 is included for context.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	But if they will not accept peace with you, but make war against you, then assail them ; for your EVER-LIVING God has given them into your hands, and destroy all the men by the edge of the sword.
HCSB	However, if it does not make peace with you but wages war against you, lay siege to it. When the LORD your God hands it over to you, you must strike down all its males with the sword.

NET Bible® If it does not accept terms of peace but makes war with you, then you are to lay siege to it. The Lord your God will deliver it over to you [Heb "to your hands."] and you must kill every single male by the sword.

NIV, ©2011 If they refuse to make peace and they engage you in battle, lay siege to that city. When the Lord your God delivers it into your hand, put to the sword all the men in it.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible However, if they refuse to make peace with you but prefer to make war against you, you are to put it under siege. When ADONAI your God hands it over to you, you are to put every male to the sword.

Kaplan Translation If they reject your peace offer and declare war, you shall lay siege to [the city]. When God your Lord gives it over into your hand, you shall then strike down its [adult] males by the sword.

Orthodox Jewish Bible And if it will make no shalom with thee, but engages in milchamah against thee, then thou shalt besiege it; And when Hashem Eloheicha hath delivered it into thine hands, thou shalt strike every male thereof with the edge of the cherev;...

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version Yet if it should not make peace with you but engages in battle with you, then you must besiege it. When Yahweh your Elohim delivers it into your hand, then you will smite every adult male of it with the edge of the sword;" but the women, the little ones, the domestic beasts and all that is in the city, all its loot, you may plunder for yourself; and you may eat from the loot of your enemies which Yahweh your Elohim gives to you. V. 14 is included for context.

New King James Version Now if *the city* will not make peace with you, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it. And when the Lord your God delivers it into your hands, you shall strike every male in it with the edge of the sword.

Syndein/Thieme And if does not surrender to you, but would join battle with you, then you shall besiege it. And when Jehovah/God your 'Elohim/Godhead has delivered it into your hands, you shall kill every male thereof with the edge of the sword. {remember . . . this is a COMMAND from God - if you are a soldier in a battle for your country - you be the BEST killer in your outfit!}

Young's Updated LT "And if it does not make peace with you, and has made with you war, then you have laid siege against it, and Jehovah your God has given it into your hand, and you have smitten every male of it by the mouth of the sword.

The gist of this verse: If the city does not agree to the terms of peace, the Israelites are to attack it and kill all the males within the city. God will give them the victory.

Deuteronomy 20:12a			
Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ʾîm (אִם) [pronounced <i>eem</i>]	<i>if, though; lo, behold; oh that, if only; when, since, though when (or, if followed by a perfect tense which refers to a past event)</i>	primarily an hypothetical particle	Strong's #518 BDB #49

Deuteronomy 20:12a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lô' (לֹא or לוֹ) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
shâlêm (שָׁלַם) [pronounced shaw-LAHM]	<i>to make peace with; to cause to be at peace; to complete, to perform; to make an end of</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #7999 BDB #1022
‘îm (עִם) [pronounced ġeem]	<i>with, at, by, near; like; from</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity with the 2 nd person singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767

Translation: *But if the city* [lit., *she*] *does not make peace with you,...* The city has two choices: to agree to the terms of peace as essentially laid out to them, or to stand against those terms.

As before, we do not know exactly what took us to this point of animosity and war, but the Jews were not generally that aggressive. That is, they did not tend to blitzkrieg all of the areas around it.

Deuteronomy 20:12b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
‘âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced ġaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
‘îm (עִם) [pronounced ġeem]	<i>with, at, by, near; like; from</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity with the 2 nd person singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
mil ^e châmâh (מִלְחָמָה) [pronounced mil-khaw-MAW]	<i>battle, war, fight, fighting; victory; fortune of war</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4421 BDB #536

Translation: *...and [instead] has made war with you,...* Let's say they do not agree to terms of peace, but choose, instead to go to war with Israel. Then Israel will be free to fight and beat down this city.

Deuteronomy 20:12c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

Deuteronomy 20:12c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
tsûwr (צוּר) [pronounced tsoor]	<i>to bind, to besiege, to confine (shut up, cramp, enclose)</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #6696 BDB #837
Tsûwr has 2 other sets of meanings: <i>to show hostility toward, to be an adversary to, to treat as a foe; and to form, to fashion, to delineate.</i>			
ʿal (עַל) [pronounced gahl]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of relative proximity with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752

Translation: ...you will besiege it... The Israeli army will then attack the city. The term means *to bind, to confine, to shut up*. The idea is, the enemy army will be confined to the city, and they will be destroyed therein.

Guzak, describing such a siege: *Typically, a walled city was conquered by use of the siege. Enemy armies surrounded a city and cut off all their supplies and contact with the outside world. When the city was sufficiently weakened through hunger or thirst, they either surrendered or were conquered. Sometimes a siege would last for years.*³⁵

The city is given the opportunity to surrender and to serve Israel—which, in turn, is serving the living God. Their other alternative is to oppose Israel, in which case, Israel is to attack the city. It is foolish to fight a war of containment or a war without the intention of winning, as per General Douglas MacArthur. He warned us against a land war in Asia roughly a decade before we became embroiled in one—which war caused a great deal of dissension and bitterness. Furthermore, we made the additional mistake of not fighting such a war to win—using every implement of war that we had. Otherwise, we should not have been there in the first place. In this verse, if you are going to make war, then you make war with the expressed intention of winning.

A siege against Samaria in northern Israel is described in 2Kings 6:24–33 *And afterwards it happened that Benhadad the king of Syria gathered all his army and went up and laid siege to Samaria. And there was a great famine in Samaria. And behold! They were laying siege to it until the head of an ass was at eighty silver pieces, and a fourth of a cab of dove's dung at five silver pieces. And it happened, the king of Israel was passing by on the wall. And a woman cried to him, saying, Save, my lord, O king. And he said, If Jehovah does not save you, from where shall I save you? Out of the threshing floor, or out of the winevat? And the king said to her, What ails you? And she said, This woman said to me, Give your son and we will eat him today; and tomorrow we will eat my son. And we boiled my son and ate him, and I said to her on the next day, Give your son, that we may eat him. But she hid her son. And it happened when the king heard the words of the woman, he tore his garments. And he was passing by on the wall, and the people looked. And, behold, the sackcloth was inside on his flesh. And he said, So may God do to me, and more also, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat shall remain on him today. And Elisha was sitting in his house, and the elders were sitting with him. And the king sent a man from before him. Before the messenger came to him, even he himself said to the elders, Do you see that this son of the murderer has sent to take away my head? Behold, when the messenger comes in, shut the door, and you shall hold him fast at the door. Is not the sound of the feet of his lord behind him? While he was speaking with them, then, behold, the messenger came down to him. And he said, Behold, this is the evil from Jehovah. Why should I wait for Jehovah any more? (Green's Literal translation)*

³⁵ David Guzik's Commentary on the Old Testament; courtesy of e-sword; ©2006; Deut. 20:12–15.

Deuteronomy 20:13a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i>]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set; to make</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ʿĒlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	<i>God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #430 BDB #43
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
yâd (יָד) [pronounced <i>yawd</i>]	generally translated <i>hand</i>	feminine singular noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #3027 BDB #388

This combination of the bēyth preposition and *hand* means *in your hand; in your power, under your control; with you; through you, by you, by means of you; at your hand [i.e., before your, in your sight]*.

Translation: ...and Y^ehowah your Elohim will give it into your hand. God promises, under these circumstances, to deliver this city into their hand, meaning He will give them the victory. Israel had one of the most successful armies in this history of mankind.

Deuteronomy 20:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
nâkâh (נָכַח) [pronounced <i>naw-KAWH</i>]	<i>to smite, to assault, to hit, to strike, to strike [something or someone] down, to defeat, to conquer, to subjugate</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil perfect	Strong #5221 BDB #645
ʿêth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84

Deuteronomy 20:13b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of, all; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
zâkûwr (זָכוּר) [pronounced zaw-KOOR]	<i>male</i>	masculine singular collective noun with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #2138 BDB #271
lâmed (ל) [pronounced le]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
peh (פֶּה) [pronounced peh]	<i>mouth [of man, animal; as an organ of speech]; opening, orifice [of a river, well, etc.]; edge; extremity, end</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6310 BDB #804
chereb (כֶּרֶב) [pronounced khe-RE ^B V]	<i>sword, knife, dagger; any sharp tool</i>	feminine singular noun; pausal form	Strong's #2719 BDB #352

Translation: You will strike down every male with the mouth of the sword. However, Israel must kill every man with the sword. These would have been the ones to determine whether to fight back or to accept the terms of peace. They chose to fight against Israel, which reveals negative volition toward their God; and, as a result, they will receive death.

Application: Those who are against the Jews today also reveal negative volition toward the God Who chose them. It ought to be a rare instance, if at all, when a Jew and a Christian are against one another in war.

If you are unsure about the way this or that country leans, then determine, *what is their attitude toward the nation Israel?* If that attitude is decidedly negative, then they are likely negative toward the plan of God and toward Jesus Christ.

If the people of the land do not surrender, the first order of business is to destroy those who are in authority, all of the males of the city. When the Midianites became involved in the plot to neutralize Israel through Balaam, Moses is told by God to: "Take full vengeance for the sons of Israel on the Midianites." So they made war against Midian, just as Y^ehowah had commanded Moses, and they killed every male (Num. 31:2a, 7).

Only the women and the children and the livestock and all which is in the city—all her spoil you will pillage to yourself. And you have devoured spoil of your enemies, who has given, Y^ehowah your Elohim, to you.

Deuteronomy
20:14

Only the women, the children, the livestock and all that is in the city—all of her wealth you will take [as spoil] to yourself. You will devour the wealth of your enemies, which [wealth] Y^ehowah your Elohim has given to you.

As victors in war, you have the rights to all of the wealth of that city, including the women, the children and all the livestock—you may take any and all of this. You may take all the spoil of your enemies, which wealth Jehovah your God has given to you.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos	But the women, children, and cattle, and whatever is in the city, even all the spoil, you shall seize, and eat the spoil of your enemies which the Lord your God gives you.
Latin Vulgate	Excepting women and children, cattle and other things, that are in the city. And you <u>will divide</u> all the prey <u>to the army</u> , and you will eat the spoils of your enemies, which the Lord your God will give you.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	Only the women and the children and the livestock and all which is in the city—all her spoil you will pillage to yourself. And you have devoured spoil of your enemies, who has given, Y ^e howah your Elohim, to you.
Peshitta (Syriac)	But the women and the little ones and the cattle and all that is in the city, even all its spoil, you shall plunder for yourselves; and you shall eat of the spoil of your enemies, which the LORD your God gives you.
Septuagint (Greek)	...except the women and the stuff; and all the livestock, and whatsoever shall be in the city, and all the plunder you shall take as spoil for yourself, and shall eat all the plunder of your enemies whom the Lord your God gives you.
Significant differences:	The Latin suggests that the prey would be divided among the soldiers. The Hebrew is less specific than that.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	However, you can take for yourselves the women, the children, the animals, and all that is in the city—all its plunder. You can then enjoy your enemies' plunder, which the Lord your God has given you.
Contemporary English V.	Take the women and children as slaves and keep the livestock and everything else of value.
Easy English	But you can take for yourselves the women, the children, the animals and everything else in the city. You can use all these things that God gives you from your enemies.
Easy-to-Read Version	But you may take for yourselves the women, the children, the cows, and everything else in the city. You may use all these things. The Lord your God has given these things to you.
<i>The Message</i>	But don't kill the women and children and animals. Everything inside the town you can take as plunder for you to use and eat--GOD, your God, gives it to you.
New Life Bible	Take for yourselves what is left, the women, the children, all the animals, and all that is in the city. Use what is left of those who fought against you, which the Lord your God has given you.
The Voice	But you can take the women, children, livestock, all the other goods in the city, and all of its spoils as your plunder for your use. The Eternal your God has given you these spoils from your enemies.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	You may spare the women, their possessions, all the cattle, and anything else that is in the city. you may loot it and take whatever you wish, and you may also eat whatever your enemies have, because Jehovah your God has given it to you.
Christian Community Bible	If they do not accept the peace that you offer them and declare war against you, you shall lay siege to the city. And when Yahweh, your God, gives it into your hands, you shall kill by the sword all the men, but the women and children, the livestock and all the other things which you find there shall be your booty, and you

shall eat from the plunder of your enemies which Yahweh has given over to you. Vv. 12–13 are included for context.

God's Word™	But take the women and children, the cattle and everything else in the city, including all its goods, as your loot. You may enjoy your enemies' goods that the LORD your God has given you.
New American Bible (R.E.)	But if it refuses to make peace with you and instead joins battle with you, lay siege to it, and when the LORD, your God, delivers it into your power, put every male in it to the sword; but the women and children and livestock and anything else in the city—all its spoil—you may take as plunder for yourselves, and you may enjoy this spoil of your enemies, which the LORD, your God, has given you. Vv. 12–13 are included for context.
New Jerusalem Bible	But the women, children, livestock and whatever the town contains by way of spoil, you may take for yourselves as booty. You will feed on the spoils of the enemies whom Yahweh your God has handed over to you.
New Simplified Bible	»You may take the women, the children, the livestock, and everything else in the city for yourselves. You may use everything that belongs to your enemies. Jehovah has given it to you.
Revised English Bible	...abut you may take the women, the dependants, and the livestock for yourselves, and plunder everything else in the town. You may enjoy the use of the spoil from your enemies which the LORD your God gives you.
Today's NIV	As for the women, the children, the livestock and everything else in the city, you may take these as plunder for yourselves. And you may use the plunder the LORD your God gives you from your enemies.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Bible in Basic English	But the women and the children and the cattle and everything in the town and all its wealth, you may take for yourselves: the wealth of your haters, which the Lord your God has given you, will be your food.
The Expanded Bible	...and you may take everything else [all the plunder] in the city for yourselves. Take the women, children, and animals, and you may use these things [the plunder] the Lord your God gives you from your enemies.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	The women and children, however, and the cattle, and all that may be in the city, all the booty, you may seize for yourselves, for you may use the booty of your enemies which your EVER-LIVING GOD gives to you.
NET Bible®	However, the women, little children, cattle, and anything else in the city - all its plunder - you may take for yourselves as spoil. You may take from your enemies the plunder that the Lord your God has given you.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	However, you are to take as booty for yourself the women, the little ones, the livestock, and everything in the city - all its spoil. Yes, you will feed on your enemies' spoil, which ADONAI your God has given you.
exeGesés companion Bible	...but the women and the toddlers and the animals and all within the city - even all the loot thereof, plunder to yourself; and eat the loot of your enemies Yah Veh your Elohim gives you.
Kaplan Translation	However, the women, children, animals, and all the goods in the city, you shall take as your spoils. You shall thus consume the spoils that God your Lord gives you from your enemies.

Orthodox Jewish Bible But the nashim, and the little ones, and the behemah, and all that is in the town, even all the plunder thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the plunder of thine enemies Hashem Eloheicha hath given thee.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	...but the women, the little ones, the domestic beasts and all that is in the city, all its loot, you may plunder for yourself; and you may eat from the loot of your enemies which Yahweh your Elohim gives to you.
Context Group Version	...but the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the plunder, you shall take for a prey to yourself; and you shall eat the plunder of your enemies, which YHWH your God has given you.
English Standard Version	...but the women and the little ones, the livestock, and everything else in the city, all its spoil, you shall take as plunder for yourselves. And you shall enjoy the spoil of your enemies, which the LORD your God has given you.
New RSV	You may, however, take as your booty the women, the children, livestock, and everything else in the town, all its spoil. You may enjoy the spoil of your enemies, which the Lord your God has given you.
Syndein/Thieme	...but the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shall you take unto yourself and you shall eat the spoil of your enemies, which Jehovah/God your 'Elohim/Godhead has given you.
World English Bible	...but the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil of it, shall you take for a prey to yourself; and you shall eat the spoil of your enemies, which Yahweh your God has given you.
Young's Updated LT	Only, the women, and the infants, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, all its spoil, you will seize for yourself, and you have eaten the spoil of your enemies which Jehovah your God has given to you.

The gist of this verse: The women, children cattle and everything else from the defeated city became the possessions of the Jews.

Deuteronomy 20:14a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
raq (רַק) [pronounced <i>rahk</i>]	<i>only, provided, altogether, surely</i> —this adverb carries with it restrictive force	adverb	Strong's #7534 & #7535 BDB #956
nâshîym (נָשִׁים) [pronounced <i>naw-SHEEM</i>]	<i>women, wives</i>	feminine plural noun; irregular plural of Strong's #802 with the definite article	Strong's #802 BDB #61
w ^e (or v ^e) (וְ, or וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
ṭaph (טַף) [pronounced <i>tahf</i>]	<i>children, little children, little ones, young boys; young people up to the age of 20; families</i>	masculine singular (collective) noun with the definite article	Strong's #2945 BDB #381

Although the ṭaph (טַף) [pronounced *tahf*] can refer to little ones, it also can refer to young men who are under the age of 20 (Ex. 12:37) and to families as well (2Chron. 20:13).

Deuteronomy 20:14a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
b ^e hêmâh (הַמְּהָה) [pronounced <i>b^ehay-MAW</i>]	<i>beasts [a collective of all animals]; mammal (s), beast, animal, cattle, livestock [domesticated animals]; wild beasts</i>	feminine singular noun often used in the collective sense; with the definite article	Strong's #929 BDB #96
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>the whole, all, the entirety, every</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'âsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
Together, kôl 'âsher mean <i>all whom, all that [which]; whomever, whatever, all whose, all where, wherever.</i>			
hâyâh (הָיָה) [pronounced <i>haw-YAW</i>]	<i>to be, is, was, are; to become, to come into being; to come to pass</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1961 BDB #224
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^eh</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
'îyr (עִיר) [pronounced <i>geer</i>]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5892 BDB #746
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	<i>the whole, all, the entirety, every</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
shâlal (שָׁלַל) [pronounced <i>shaw-LAWL</i>]	<i>booty, spoil, plunder, recompense, reward; wealth [taken as spoil]</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #7998 BDB #1021
bâzaz (בָּזַז) [pronounced <i>baw-ZAHZ</i>]	<i>to spoil, to plunder, to pillage, to despoil, to take as plunder; to depredate, to freeboot, to ransack</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #962 BDB #102
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: Only the women, the children, the livestock and all that is in the city—all of her wealth you will take [as spoil] to yourself. In war, the victor may take all which belongs to the city. Other cities and other nations do not have to have a relationship of animus with Israel. This is their choice. And when they take this as far as warfare, then all that they own is subject to loss.

We do have clear evidence of Israel taking the women, children and livestock to themselves in Num. 31:9, 12, 18 Joshua 8:2 11:14 22:8 2Chron. 14:13–15 20:25 Psalm 68:12.

Generally speaking, Israel was not an aggressive nation. Although it fought wars against Moab, Ammon, Edom, Midian, etc. (nearby nations), Israel did not begin these wars. There is ample evidence that Israel established bonds with various nations, but that these nations turned against them. 2Sam. 10 indicates, for instance, that King David had a good relationship with the Ammonites, and when King Nahash died, David sent ambassadors to convey his grief. However, Hanun, the son of Nahash, rejected David's kindness and became David's enemy. It is at this point that these war regulations kick in.

It would be far better for a nation to cultivate a good relationship with Israel than to constantly have an antagonistic relationship. And, again, the people around them would know of their relationship to God and would know how their God brought them out of Egypt with a great arm.

Application: A nation like the United States can evangelize peacefully or as a result of war. Quite obviously, our government would never evangelize (not in my time, anyway—I write this in 2013), but the people of the United States send out missionaries and evangelists. This is done peacefully because a population of believers is going to remain on good terms with the United States.

Application: In World War II, we were pulled into a war against great evil, but, as a result, many nations were evangelized as a result of this great war. General MacArthur **called for missionaries** and Bibles in **Japan**. This is why, 70 years later, we are allies with Japan.

The negative volition of the nations surrounding Israel would manifest itself in their enmity with Israel. And when these nations became antagonistic toward the God of Israel, war would be the result.

Deuteronomy 20:14b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'âkal (אָכַל) [pronounced <i>aw-KAHL</i>]	<i>to eat; to devour, to consume, to destroy</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #398 BDB #37
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
shâlal (שָׁלַל) [pronounced <i>shaw-LAWL</i>]	<i>booty, spoil, plunder, recompense, reward; wealth [taken as spoil]</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #7998 BDB #1021
'âyab (אֵיבָב) [pronounced <i>aw-YA^BV</i>]	<i>enemy, the one being at enmity with you; enmity, hostility</i>	masculine plural, Qal active participle with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #340 & #341 BDB #33
'âsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced <i>naw-THAHN</i>]	<i>to give, to grant, to place, to put, to set; to make</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #5414 BDB #678

Deuteronomy 20:14b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
ʿĒlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	<i>God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #430 BDB #43
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ʰ]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510

Translation: You will devour the wealth of your enemies, which [wealth] Y^ehowah your Elohim has given to you. Because of the old fashioned sound of *spoils* and *booty*, I have rendered this word as *wealth*; it is the wealth of a beaten nation which the victors are allowed to claim.

The choice for the city is simple—they either all go into slavery, or the men are killed and those who remain go into slavery. In any case, the city then belongs to the Israelites. God would clearly instruct the Israelites what they could take and what they could not. “And you will do to Ai and its king just as you did to Jericho and its king; you will take only its spoil and its cattle as plunder for yourselves.” (Joshua 8:2a; see Num. 31:11, 53 Joshua 11:14 22:8 as well).

The phrase *you will devour the wealth of your enemies* meant that the Israelites were to take the people of the land and the things of the land and use them for their own building up and maintenance.

Key to this understanding is, God gave this all to Israel, by virtue of their relationship to Him. God has given this all to them. We find a similar sentiment expressed in Psalm 44:3 *For they did not get the land in possession by their own sword, Neither did their own arm save them; But your right hand, and Your arm, and the light of Your countenance, Because You were favorable to them.* (Updated Bible Version 2.11; capitalized)

Application: There is so much in the life that can be yours, simply because of your relationship to God.

The Fenton Farrar Bible inserts Deut. 21:10–14 at this point: *When you advance to war with your enemies, and your Ever-living God gives them into your hand, and you take them captive, and see amongst the captives there is a beautiful woman, and you have a desire for her to take her to yourself as a wife, you shall take her into the sanctuary of your house, and uncover her head, and pare her nails, and she shall put off the clothing in which she was captured, and reside in your house, and weep for her father and mother the space of a month, and after that you can go to her and marry her, and she shall be your wife. But if it then happens that you do not like her, you shall free her for life, - you shall not sell her for money,- - you shall not treat her as a slave, because you have degraded her.* This will also be included at the very end, with the translation, so that, by reading this through, you will see how well this passage fits in here.

This does appear to be a very logical place to put this section. It does fit well right here.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Procedures for Attacking the Heathen in the Land of Promise

So you will do to all the cities distant from you greatly, which [are] not from cities of the nations the these here.

Deuteronomy
20:15

So you will do to all the cities greatly distant from you, which [are] not the cities of these nations [near] here.

This is what you will do with all the cities which are far from here; this is not what you will do with the cities that are near to you.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos	Thus shall you do to all cities that are remote from you, which are not of the cities of these <u>seven</u> nations;...
Latin Vulgate	So will you do to all cities that are at a great distance from you, and are not of these <u>cities which you will receive in possession</u> .
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	So you will do to all the cities distant from you greatly, which [are] not from cities of the nations the these here.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Thus shall you do to all the cities which are very far off from you, which are not of the cities of these nations.
Septuagint (Greek)	Thus shall you do to all the cities that are very far off from you, not being of the cities of these nations <u>which the Lord your God gives you to inherit their land</u> .

Significant differences: The Greek adds an additional phrase at the end which makes great sense. However, this is found in the next verse in the Hebrew. The targum has *seven nations* at the very end. The Latin has a similar phrase at the end, but which is not exactly like the Greek.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	That's what you must do to all the cities that are located far away from you—specifically, those cities that don't belong to these nations here.
Easy English	You must do this to all the cities that are far from you.
Easy-to-Read Version	That is what you must do to all the cities that are very far from you—the cities that are not in the land where you will live.
Good News Bible (TEV)	That is how you are to deal with those cities that are far away from the land you will settle in.
<i>The Message</i>	This is the way you deal with the distant towns, the towns that don't belong to the nations at hand.
New Berkeley Version	"Such is the way you shall deal with cities that are at a considerable distance from you and do not belong to nations nearby.
New Living Translation	"But these instructions apply only to distant towns, not to the towns of the nations in the land you will enter.
The Voice	This is what you're to do with cities that are a great distance from you that don't belong to the nations living here.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	'Now, that's what you must do to the distant cities, not to the cities of these nations that Jehovah your God is giving you and where you will inherit their land. The AEB treats this as the beginning of a new paragraph.
Beck's American Translation	Do this to all the towns that are far away, towns that don't belong to these people nearby.
Christian Community Bible	This you shall do to all the cities which are very far from you and which are not in the country which you will possess.
<i>God's Word</i> ™	This is what you must do to all the cities that are far away which don't belong to the nations nearby.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	All this, when thou art concerned with some city far away from thee, not one of those in which thou art to find a dwelling.
New American Bible (R.E.)	That is how you shall deal with any city at a considerable distance from you, which does not belong to these nations here. Deuteronomy makes a distinction between treatment of nations far away and those close at hand whose abhorrent religious practices might, or did, influence Israel's worship. This harsh policy was to make sure the nations nearby did not pass their practices on to Israel (cf. chap. 7).
NIRV	That's how you must treat all of the cities that are far away from you. Those cities don't belong to the nations that are nearby.
New Jerusalem Bible	'That is how you will treat towns far away and not belonging to the nations near you.
Revised English Bible	That is how you are to deal with towns at a great distance, as opposed to those which belong to nations near at hand.
Today's NIV	This is how you are to treat all the cities that are at a distance from you and do not belong to the nations nearby.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear Bible in Basic English	So you do to all their cities very far from you, not the cities of these nations.
The Expanded Bible	So you are to do to all the towns far away, which are not the towns of these nations.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	Do this to all the cities that are far away, that do not belong to the nations nearby.
NET Bible®	You must do the same to all the cities afar from you, which are not of cities of these nations here. Prior to this, F.F. inserts Deut. 21:10–14.
	This is how you are to deal with all those cities located far from you, those that do not belong to these nearby nations.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	This is what you are to do to all the towns which are at a great distance from you, which are not the towns of these nations.
exeGesés companion Bible	Thus work to all the cities mighty far from you, who are not of the cities of these goyim.
Kaplan Translation	That is what you must do to the cities that are very far from you, and which do not belong to the nations that are here.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Thus shalt thou do unto all the towns which are very far off from thee, which are not of the towns of these Goyim.
<i>The Scriptures</i> 1998	“Do so to all the cities which are very far from you, which are not of the cities of these nations.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

<i>The Amplified Bible</i>	So shall you treat all the cities that are very far off from you, that do not belong to the cities of these nations.
Concordant Literal Version	Thus shall you deal with all the cities which are the very farthest from you, those that are not of the cities of these nations.

Context Group Version	Thus you shall do to all the cities which are very far off from you, which are not of the cities of these nations.
The Geneva Bible	Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities [which are] very far off from thee, which [are] not of the cities of these nations. For God had appointed the Canaanites to be destroyed, and made the Israelites the executers of his will, (Deuteronomy 7:1).
New RSV	Thus you shall treat all the towns that are very far from you, which are not towns of the nations here.
Webster's Bible Translation	Thus shalt thou do to all the cities [which are] very distant from thee, which [are] not of the cities of these nations.
World English Bible	Thus shall you do to all the cities which are very far off from you, which are not of the cities of these nations.
Young's Updated LT	So you will do to all the cities which are very far off from you, which are not of the cities of these nations.

The gist of this verse: The procedures for war previously described are for those nations outside of Israel and are not applied to those nations within the land of Canaan that Israel would take, as directed by God.

Deuteronomy 20:15a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kên (כֵּן) [pronounced kane]	<i>so, therefore, thus; then, afterwards; upright, honest; rightly, well; [it is] so, such, so constituted</i>	properly, an active participle; used primarily as an adverb	Strong's #3651 BDB #485
'âsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced gaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^o]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>the whole, all of, the entirety of, all; can also be rendered any of</i>	masculine singular construct followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
'îyr (עִיר) [pronounced geer]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #5892 BDB #746
râchôwq (רָחוֹק) [pronounced raw-KHOHK]	<i>distant, far; as a noun, it means distance (which can be a reference to time or space)</i>	masculine plural adjective	Strong's #7350 BDB #935
min (מִן) [pronounced mihn]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
m ^o ôd (מְאֹד) [pronounced m ^o -ODE]	<i>exceedingly, extremely, greatly, very</i>	adverb	Strong's #3966 BDB #547

Translation: *So you will do to all the cities greatly distant from you,...* What Moses has described is how Israel will deal with various cities that are farther out from Israel.

God has a different program for the indigenous peoples of the land. For the cities which are far away from Israel, they will be given the opportunity to surrender. By that time, they will have heard of the Israelites going into the land and conquering it and they would have heard of God's mighty deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt. "And I [Y^ehowah] will fix your boundary from the Sea of Reeds to the sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the River [Euphrates], for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you will drive them out before you. You will make no covenant with them or with their gods. They will not live in your land, so they will not make you sin against Me—for if you serve their gods, it will certainly be a snare to you." (Ex. 23:31–33). Israel will deal differently with those who fall within the immediate boundaries of the land which they are about to take.

Deuteronomy 20:15b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
lô' (לֹא or לוֹ) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
ʾîyr (עִיר) [pronounced geeer]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong's #5892 BDB #746
gôwyîm (גּוֹיִם) [pronounced goh-YIHM]	<i>Gentiles, [Gentile] nations, people, peoples, nations</i>	masculine plural noun with the definite article	Strong's #1471 BDB #156
ʾelleh (אֵלֶּה) [pronounced ALE-leh]	<i>these, these things</i>	demonstrative plural adjective with the definite article (often the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	Strong's #428 BDB #41
hênnâh (הֵנָּה) [pronounced HAYN-naw]	<i>hither, here</i>	adverb	Strong's #2008 BDB #244

The Greek ends this sentence with several additional words: *of the cities of these nations which the Lord your God gives you to inherit their land*. However, those words are found, more or less, in the next verse in the Hebrew.

Translation: *...which [are] not the cities of these nations [near] here*. This procedure is not designed for the nations which are nearby—those which Israel would invade over the next few years.

Given how animated and expressive the Jews tended to be, it is very likely that Moses is gesticulating all the while speaking, and when he speaks of the nations here, he probably waves his arm to take in the nations which are due west of them. That would help to explain what appears to be missing words in the Hebrew. This is, after all, a public speech which Moses is giving. Therefore, a little gesticulation would be expected. At the same time, adding a few words to indicate which nations are being spoken of would not be wrong.

John Calvin: *[The] exception is introduced, that the Jews should not apply the common laws of war to the Canaanitish nations, with respect to whose extermination the sentence had passed. For God had not only armed the Jews to carry on war with them, but had appointed them to be the ministers and executioners of His vengeance...[God] would have their race and memory radically destroyed;*

*especially since He had borne with them for four hundred years, whilst in their wicked obstinacy they had not ceased to grow worse and worse, from whence their desperate impiety was manifest.*³⁶

Only from cities of the peoples the these whom Y^ehowah your Elohim is giving to you—an inheritance—you will not keep alive every breath; for devoting, you will devote them—the Hittite and the Amorite, the Canaanite and the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite as which has commanded you Y^ehowah your Elohim. On account of that they will not teach you to do as all their abominations which they have done to their elohim, and you have sinned to Y^ehowah your Elohim.

Deuteronomy
20:16–18

Only from the cities of these people whom Y^ehowah your Elohim is giving you [as] an inheritance—[of them], you will not keep alive any living thing. At that time, you will utterly destroy them [by devoting them to a godly destruction]: the Hittite and the Amorite, the Canaanite and the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite—as Y^ehowah your Elohim has commanded you. [This is] to the end that, they will not [be able to] teach you to do all their disgusting acts which they have done for their gods. [By letting any of them live] you will have sinned before Y^ehowah your Elohim.

You will not keep anyone alive from the cities that Jehovah your God has given to you as your inheritance. When you enter into the land to take it, you will completely destroy all of them—the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites—just as Jehovah your God has commanded you to do. This is so that they will not be able to teach you to do the disgusting things which they do before their gods. In fact, if you let them live, then you will have sinned before Jehovah your God.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos	Thus shall you do to all cities that are remote from you, which are not of the cities of these <u>seven</u> nations; but of the cities of these peoples, which the Lord your God gives you to inherit, ye shall not spare alive any breathing thing: for destroying ye shall destroy them, Hittites, Amorites, Kenaanites, Pherizites, Hivites, and Jebusites, as the Lord your God has commanded you; that they may not teach you to do after their abominations with which they have served their idols, and you sin before the Lord your God. The previous verse is included for context.
Latin Vulgate	But of those cities that will be given you, you will suffer none at all to live: But will kill them with the edge of the sword, to wit, the Hethite, and the Amorrhite, and the Chanaanite, the Pherizite, and the Hevite, and the Jebusite, as the Lord your God has commanded you: Lest they teach you to do all the abominations which they have done to their gods: and you should sin against the Lord your God.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	Only from cities of the peoples the these whom Y ^e howah your Elohim is giving to you—an inheritance—you will not keep alive every breath; for devoting, you will devote them—the Hittite and the Amorite, the Canaanite and the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite as which has commanded you Y ^e howah your Elohim. On account of that they will not teach you to do as all their abominations which they have done to their elohim, and you have sinned to Y ^e howah your Elohim.
Peshitta (Syriac)	But of the cities of these people which the LORD your God gives you for an inheritance, you shall save alive nothing that breathes; But you shall utterly destroy them; namely, the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; as the LORD your God has commanded you; That they

³⁶ John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentary on the Bible*; 2nd beta version from e-Sword, Deut. 20:15.

may not teach you to do after all their abominations, which they have done in worshipping their gods; so you should sin in the sight of the LORD your God. Thus shall you do to all the cities that are very far off from you, not being of the cities of these nations which the Lord your God gives you to inherit their land. *Of these* you shall not take anything alive; but you shall surely curse them, the Hittite, the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, the Jebusite, and the Girgashite; as the Lord your God commanded you: that they may not teach you to do all their abominations, which they did to their gods, and so you should sin before the Lord your God. V. 15 is included for context.

Significant differences: The Greek is missing some verbiage at the beginning because, if you will recall, it was found at the end of v. 15 (included above).

The targum appears to have some additional text, as usual; possibly more than what is underlined.

By devoting, you will devote is actually equivalent to *destroying, you will destroy* (the targum) and to *you will utterly curse them* (in the Greek). This will be borne out by the study of the Hebrew verb found here.

The Greek adds a 7th nation, *the Girgashites*.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible But in the case of any of the cities of these peoples—the ones the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance—you must not spare any living thing. Instead, you must place these under the ban [A technique of holy war that often involves total destruction, in which everything that is destroyed is dedicated to the deity who helps in the battle]: Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites—just as the Lord your God commanded you. Then they can't teach you to do all the detestable things they did for their gods, with the result that you end up sinning against the Lord your God.

Contemporary English V. Whenever you capture towns in the land the LORD your God is giving you, be sure to kill all the people and animals. He has commanded you to completely wipe out the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. If you allow them to live, they will persuade you to worship their disgusting gods, and you will be unfaithful to the LORD.

Easy English You will take cities in the country that God is giving you. Then you must kill everything that is alive, people and animals. You must kill completely all the *Hittites, *Amorites, *Canaanites, *Perizzites, *Hivites and *Jebusites. The *Lord your God has told you to do this.

Then they cannot teach you their bad practices, as they pray to their gods. If you did this, you would be doing wrong things against the *Lord your God. Verses 16-18 God had promised to give the whole country called Canaan to the *Israelites. They must kill all other people who were living in that country. *Israelites must not mix with them by marriage and they must not pray to their gods.

Easy-to-Read Version "But when you take cities in the land that the Lord your God is giving you, you must kill everyone. You must completely destroy all the people—the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. The Lord your God has commanded you to do this. Why? Because then they won't be able to teach you to sin against the Lord your God. They will not be able to teach you to do any of the terrible things they do when they worship their gods.

Good News Bible (TEV) "But when you capture cities in the land that the LORD your God is giving you, kill everyone. Completely destroy all the people: the Hittites, the Amorites, the

	Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, as the LORD ordered you to do. Kill them, so that they will not make you sin against the LORD by teaching you to do all the disgusting things that they do in the worship of their gods.
<i>The Message</i>	But with the towns of the people that GOD, your God, is giving you as an inheritance, it's different: don't leave anyone alive. Consign them to holy destruction: the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, obeying the command of GOD, your God. This is so there won't be any of them left to teach you to practice the abominations that they engage in with their gods and you end up sinning against GOD, your God.
New Century Version	But leave nothing alive in the cities of the land the Lord your God is giving you. Completely destroy these people: the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, as the Lord your God has commanded. Otherwise, they will teach you what they do for their gods, and if you do these hateful things, you will sin against the Lord your God.
New Life Bible	But in the cities of these nations that the Lord your God is giving you for your own, do not leave alive anything that breathes. Destroy everything and everyone in them, the Hittite, the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, as the Lord your God has told you. Then they will not teach you to do all the hated and sinful things they have done for their gods, and make you sin against the Lord your God.
New Living Translation	In those towns that the Lord your God is giving you as a special possession, destroy every living thing. You must completely destroy [The Hebrew term used here refers to the complete consecration of things or people to the Lord, either by destroying them or by giving them as an offering.] the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, just as the Lord your God has commanded you. This will prevent the people of the land from teaching you to imitate their detestable customs in the worship of their gods, which would cause you to sin deeply against the Lord your God.
The Voice	But when you conquer one of the cities the Eternal, your True God, is giving you to live in and pass on to your children, don't spare anything that breathes! <i>If it's a city that belongs to</i> the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, or the Jebusites, then completely destroy the inhabitants as He has commanded you. If you don't, they'll teach you to do all the horrible things they do for their gods, and you'll sin against Him.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	You must not leave anything alive there! You must curse the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, just as Jehovah your God commanded you, so they don't teach you to do all the disgusting things that they are doing before their gods and cause you to sin before Jehovah your God.
Christian Community Bible	But in the cities which Yahweh gives you as an inheritance, you shall not leave anything that lives. You must destroy them all according to the law of anathema—the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites—as Yah weh, your God, has commanded you, that they may not teach you all those evil things which they have done to honor their gods, for by imitating them you shall sin against Yahweh, your God.
<i>God's Word</i> ™	However, you must not spare anyone's life in the cities of these nations that the LORD your God is giving you as your property. You must claim the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites for the LORD and completely destroy them, as the LORD your God has commanded you. Otherwise, they will teach you to do all the disgusting things they do for their gods, and you will sin against the LORD your God.

New Advent (Knox) Bible	But in the cities that are to be thy own, no living thing must be left. All of them must be put to the sword, Hethite and Amorrhite and Chanaanite and Pherezite and Hevite and Jebusite, as the Lord thy God has bidden thee; or they will teach your race to perform such detestable worship as they perform in honour of their own gods, and be false to the Lord.
New American Bible	But in the cities of those nations which the LORD, your God, is giving you as your heritage, you shall not leave a single soul alive. You must doom them all - the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites - as the LORD, your God, has commanded you, lest they teach you to make any such abominable offerings as they make to their gods, and you thus sin against the LORD, your God.
New American Bible (R.E.)	But in the cities of these peoples that the LORD, your God, is giving you as a heritage, you shall not leave a single soul alive. You must put them all under the ban—the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites—just as the LORD, your God, has commanded you, so that they do not teach you to do all the abominations that they do for their gods, and you thus sin against the LORD, your God. Dt 7:1-2; 12:29-31; Jos 10:40; 11:11, 14.
NIRV	But what about the cities the Lord your God is giving you as your own? Kill everything in those cities that breathes. Completely destroy them. Wipe out the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. That's what the Lord your God commanded you to do. If you don't destroy them, they'll teach you to follow all of the things the Lord hates. He hates the way they worship their gods. If you do those things, you will sin against the Lord your God.
New Jerusalem Bible	But as regards the towns of those peoples whom Yahweh your God is giving you as your heritage, you must not spare the life of any living thing. Instead, you must lay them under the curse of destruction: Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, as Yahweh your God has commanded, so that they may not teach you to do all the detestable things which they do to honour their gods: in doing these, you would sin against Yahweh your God.
New Simplified Bible	»Do not spare anyone's life in the cities of these nations Jehovah your God is giving you as your property. »You must capture the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites for Jehovah and completely destroy them. Jehovah your God commands you. »Otherwise, they will teach you to do all the disgusting things they do for their gods. You will sin against Jehovah your God.
Revised English Bible	In the towns of these nations whose land the LORD your God is giving you as your holding, you must not leave a soul alive. As the LORD your God commanded you, you must destroy them under solemn ban—Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, Jebusites—so that they may not teach you to imitate the abominable practices they have carried on for their gods, and so cause you to sin against the LORD your God.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Only none of any of the peoples of these cities which Yahweh your God gives you as an inheritance lives and breathes. Condemn them: the Central-Syrians, the North-Jordanians, the Canaanites, the ironsmiths, the West-Bankers and the Jebusites (Jerusalem) as Yahweh your God commanded you. Therefore they will not teach you to do any of their abominations which they do with their gods, for you to sin to Yahweh your God.
Bible in Basic English	But in the towns of these peoples whose land the Lord your God is giving you for your heritage, let no living thing be kept from death: Give them up to the curse; the Hittite, the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite, as the Lord your God has given you orders: So that you may not take them as your

example and do all the disgusting things which they do in the worship of their gods, so sinning against the Lord your God.

The Expanded Bible

But ·leave nothing alive [^Ldo not let anything that breathes live] in the cities of the land the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance. ·Completely destroy [Devote to the Lord; Josh. 6:17] these people: the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, as the Lord your God has commanded. Otherwise, they will teach you what they do for their gods, and if you do these ·hateful [detestable; abhorrent; abominable] things, you will sin against the Lord your God.

Ferar-Fenton Bible

You must do the same to all the cities afar from you, which are not of cities of these nations here. But in the cities of these Peoples, that your Ever-living God has given to you to divide, you shall not preserve a living breath, but devote them ; - the Hitites, and the Amorites, and the Cananites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, - according to the command of your Ever-living God. The reason is, - so that you may not learn from them to practise all the depravities which they practise against GOD, and thus you would sin against your Ever-living God.

HCSB

However, you must not let any living thing survive among the cities of these people the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance. You must completely destroy them--the Hittite, Amorite, Canaanite, Perizzite, Hivite, and Jebusite--as the LORD your God has commanded you, so that they won't teach you to do all the detestable things they do for their gods, and you sin against the LORD your God.

NET Bible®

Laws Concerning War with Canaanite Nations

As for the cities of these peoples that [The antecedent of the relative pronoun is "cities."] the Lord your God is going to give you as an inheritance, you must not allow a single living thing [Heb "any breath."] to survive. Instead you must utterly annihilate them [The Hebrew text uses the infinitive absolute for emphasis, which the translation seeks to reflect with "utterly." Cf. CEV "completely wipe out."] [The Hebrew verb refers to placing persons or things so evil and/or impure as to be irredeemable under God's judgment, usually to the extent of their complete destruction. See also the note on the phrase "the divine judgment" in Deut 2:34.] - **the Hittites** [The center of Hittite power was in Anatolia (central modern Turkey). In the Late Bronze Age (1550-1200 b.c.) they were at their zenith, establishing outposts and colonies near and far. Some elements were obviously in Canaan at the time of the Conquest (1400-1350 b.c.), **Amorites** [Originally from the upper Euphrates region (Amurru), the Amorites appear to have migrated into Canaan beginning in 2200 b.c. or thereabouts.], **Canaanites** [These were the indigenous peoples of the land of Palestine, going back to the beginning of recorded history (ca. 3000 b.c.). The OT identifies them as descendants of Ham (Gen 10:6), the only Hamites to have settled north and east of Egypt.], **Perizzites** [This probably refers to a subgroup of Canaanites (Gen 13:7; 34:30).], **Hivites** [These are usually thought to be the same as the Hurrians, a people well-known in ancient Near Eastern texts. They are likely identical to the Horites (see note on "Horites" in Deut 2:12).], **and Jebusites** [The LXX adds "Girgashites" here at the end of the list in order to list the full (and usual) complement of seven (see note on "seven" in Deut 7:1).] [Jebusite. These people inhabited the hill country, particularly in and about Jerusalem (cf. Num 13:29; Josh 15:8; 2 Sam 5:6; 24:16).] - just as the Lord your God has commanded you, so that they cannot teach you all the abhorrent ways they worship [Heb "to do according to all their abominations which they do for their gods."] their gods, causing you to sin against the Lord your God.

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However, in the cities of the nations the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance, do not leave alive anything that breathes. Completely destroy [The Hebrew term refers to the irrevocable giving over of things or persons to the Lord, often by totally destroying them.] them--the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites--as the Lord your God has commanded you. Otherwise, they

will teach you to follow all the detestable things they do in worshipping their gods, and you will sin against the Lord your God.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

- Complete Jewish Bible "As for the towns of these peoples, which ADONAI your God is giving you as your inheritance, you are not to allow anything that breathes to live. Rather you must destroy them completely - the Hitti, the Emori, the Kena'ani, the P'rizi, the Hivi and the Y'vusi - as ADONAI your God has ordered you; so that they won't teach you to follow their abominable practices, which they do for their gods, thus causing you to sin against ADONAI your God.
- exeGeses companion Bible Only, of the cities of these people, Yah Veh your Elohim gives you - an inheritance, preserve naught alive that breathes: but in devoting, devote them - the Hethiy and the Emoriy the Kenaaniy and the Perizziy the Hivviy and the Yebusiy as Yah Veh your Elohim misvahed you: so that they not teach you to work after all the abhorrences they worked to their elohim - and thus sin against Yah Veh your Elohim.
- JPS (Tanakh—1985) In the towns of the latter peoples, however, which the LORD your God is giving you as a heritage, you shall not let a soul remain alive. No, you must proscribe [See Lev. 27:29] them—the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites—as the LORD God has commanded you, lest they lead you into doing all the abhorrent things that they have done for their gods and you stand guilty before the LORD your God.
- Judaica Press Complete T. However, of these peoples' cities, which the Lord, your God, gives you as an inheritance, you shall not allow any soul to live. Rather, you shall utterly destroy them: The Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivvites, and the Jebusites, as the Lord, your God, has commanded you. So that they should not teach you to act according to all their abominations that they have done for their gods, whereby you would sin against the Lord, your God.
- Kaplan Translation However, when dealing with the cities of these nations, which God your Lord is giving you as hereditary territory, you shall not allow any people to remain alive [If they do not make peace as in Deuteronomy 20:10 (Yad, Melakhim 6:1; Ramban). Others maintain that one can only make peace with distant nations, but nearby nations must be annihilated (Rashi).]. Where the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Yebusites are involved, you must wipe them out completely, as God your Lord commanded you [Numbers 21:2, 33:52, Deuteronomy 7:1,2.]. This is so that they will not teach you all the revolting practices with which they worship their gods, causing you to sin to God your Lord.
- Orthodox Jewish Bible But of the towns of these people, which Hashem Eloheicha doth give thee for a nachalah, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth; But thou shalt utterly put them under cherem of destruction; namely, the Chitti, and the Emori, the Kena'ni, and the Perizzi, the Chivi, and the Yevusi; as Hashem Eloheicha hath commanded thee; That they teach you not to do after all their to'evot (abominations) which they have done unto their elohim; so that ye would sin against Hashem Eloheichem.
- The Scriptures 1998 "Only, of the cities of these peoples which יהוה your Elohim gives you as an inheritance, you do not keep alive any that breathe, but you shall certainly put them under the ban: the Hittite and the Amorite and the Kena'anite and the Perizzite and the Hivvite and the Yebusite, as יהוה your Elohim has commanded you, lest they

teach you to do according to all their abominations which they have done for their mighty ones, and you sin against יהוה your Elohim.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	But in the cities of these peoples which Yahweh your Elohim is giving to you as an allotment you shall not keep alive anything that has breath, for you shall doom, yea doom them, the Hittite, the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Girgashite, the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, just as Yahweh your Elohim had instructed you, that they may not teach you to act according to all their abhorrences which they do for their elohim so that you might sin against Yahweh your Elohim.
Context Group Version	But of the cities of these peoples, that YHWH your God gives you for an inheritance, you shall rescue alive nothing that breathes; but you shall completely destroy them: the Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite; as YHWH your God has commanded you; that they don't teach you { pl } to follow all their disgusting behaviors, which they have done to their gods; so you { pl } would disgrace YHWH your { pl } God.
English Standard V. – UK	But in the cities of these peoples that the Lord your God is giving you for an inheritance, you shall save alive nothing that breathes, but you shall devote them to complete destruction [That is, set apart (devote) as an offering to the Lord (for destruction)], the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, as the Lord your God has commanded, that they may not teach you to do according to all their abominable practices that they have done for their gods, and so you sin against the Lord your God.
Green's Literal Translation	But of the cities of these peoples which Jehovah your God is giving to you as an inheritance, you shall not keep alive any that breathes. But you shall utterly destroy them, the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, as Jehovah your God has commanded you; so that they may not teach you to do according to all their filthy deeds which they have done for their gods; and you would sin against Jehovah your God.
NASB	Only in the cities of these peoples that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, you shall not leave alive anything that breathes. But you shall [k]utterly destroy them, the Hittite and the Amorite, the Canaanite and the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, as the Lord your God has commanded you, so that they may not teach you to do according to all their detestable things which they have done for their gods, so that you would sin against the LORD your God.
New RSV	But as for the towns of these peoples that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance, you must not let anything that breathes remain alive. You shall annihilate them-the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites-just as the Lord your God has commanded, so that they may not teach you to do all the abhorrent things that they do for their gods, and you thus sin against the LORD your God.
Syndein/Thieme	But of the cities of these people, which Jehovah/God your Elohim/Godhead dose give you for an inheritance, you shall save alive nothing that breaths. But you shall utterly destroy them . . . namely, the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites {see Joshua 9 - Gibeonites were Hivites},and the Jebusites . . . as Jehovah/God your Elohim/Godhead has commanded you. {Reason for Annihilation commanded above} Lest they lead you into doing all the abhorrent things that they have done for their gods/'Elohim so you stand guilty before Jehovah/God your 'Elohiym/Godhead.
Updated Bible Version 2.11	But of the cities of these peoples, that Yahweh your God gives you for an inheritance, you will save alive nothing that breathes; but you will completely destroy them: the Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite; as Yahweh your God has commanded you; that they don't teach you+

to follow all their disgusting behaviors, which they have done to their gods; so you+ would sin against Yahweh your+ God. *You+* in the Updated Bible Version 2.11 refers to the plural *you*.

A Voice in the Wilderness

But of the cities of these peoples which Jehovah your God is giving you as an inheritance, you shall let nothing that breathes remain alive, but you shall destroy to exterminate them: the Hittite and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite, as Jehovah your God has commanded you; that they not teach you to do according to all their abominations which they have done unto their gods, and you sin against Jehovah your God.

Young’s Updated LT

“Only, of the cities of these peoples which Jehovah your God is giving to you for an inheritance, you will not keep alive any breathing; for you will certainly devote the Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite, as Jehovah your God has commanded you, so that they teach you not to do according to all their abominations which they have done to their gods, and you have sinned against Jehovah your God.

The gist of this verse:

Of the cities within Canaan, these people were to be completely destroyed so that the Jews did not follow them in their heathen worship practices.

Deuteronomy 20:16a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong’s Numbers
raq (רַק) [pronounced <i>rahk</i>]	<i>only, provided, altogether, surely</i> —this adverb carries with it restrictive force	adverb	Strong’s #7534 & #7535 BDB #956
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong’s #4480 BDB #577
‘ıyr (עִיר) [pronounced <i>geer</i>]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine plural construct	Strong’s #5892 BDB #746
‘ammıym (עַמִּים) [pronounced <i>gahm-MEEM</i>]	<i>peoples, nations; tribes [of Israel]; relatives of anyone</i>	masculine plural collective noun with the definite article	Strong’s #5971 BDB #766
’elleh (אֵלֶּה) [pronounced <i>ALE-leh</i>]	<i>these, these things</i>	demonstrative plural adjective with the definite article (often the verb <i>to be</i> is implied)	Strong’s #428 BDB #41
’asher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong’s #834 BDB #81
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly <i>yhoh-WAH</i>]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Yehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong’s #3068 BDB #217
’Ēlôhıym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]	<i>God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong’s #430 BDB #43

Deuteronomy 20:16a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
nâthan (נָתַן) [pronounced naw-THAHN]	<i>is giving, granting, is placing, putting, setting; is making</i>	Qal active participle	Strong's #5414 BDB #678
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^o]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	No Strong's # BDB #510
nachlâh (נַחֲלָה) [pronounced nah-khuh-LAW]	<i>inheritance, possession, property, heritage</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #5159 BDB #635

Translation: Only from the cities of these people whom Y^ehowah your Elohim is giving you [as] an inheritance... Moses here makes a distinction between what he has just instructed the people to do and what God has previously instructed them to do. For cities outside of Israel which the Israelites attacked, they were to offer them terms of peace first. However, inside of the Land of Promise, this was not to be their approach. God has given this land to Israel as an inheritance, and they were to be dealt with differently.

The adverb raq (רַק) [pronounced rahk] has restrictive force, which sets apart a group of people who are not subject to the regulations cited in the previous verses. Therefore, for the many nations which lived within the land of promise, God would be require Israel to completely destroy them.

Deuteronomy 20:16b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lô' (לֹא or לוֹ) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
châyâh (חַיָּה) [pronounced khaw-YAW]	<i>to cause to live, to make alive; to keep alive, to preserve; to call back to life; to restore life; to rebuild [a city]</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Piel imperfect	Strong's #2421 & #2425 BDB #310
kôl (כֹּל) [pronounced kohl]	<i>every, each, all of, all; any of, any</i>	masculine singular construct not followed by a definite article	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
n ^e shâmâh (נְשָׁמָה) [pronounced n ^e shaw-MAW]	<i>breath; spirit; living creature; mind; panting, anger</i>	feminine singular substantive	Strong's #5397 BDB #675

With kôl, it means *every breathing thing, every living creature, any living thing*.

Translation: ... —[of them], you will not keep alive any living thing. Of those cities within the Land of Promise, which God had the Jews first go in to take—no one was to be left alive (there were some notable exceptions, which will be documented in the book of Joshua). But, in general, no one was to be left alive of these peoples. God is using the Israelites to completely destroy these people, who have become a cancer of that region.

While this reads, *you will not keep alive all that breathe*; this is a reference to human beings and not to animals. This is easily seen when one compares Joshua 10:40 and 11:11 with 11:14.

This group of peoples in the land had been given an opportunity to change their minds about the incredible evil in which they were involved. They had reached a saturation point of evil where there was no return. They had to be removed from the face of the earth. “When Y^ehowah your God will bring you into the land where you are entering to possess it, and He will clear away many nations before you—the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorite and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites—seven nations greater and stronger than you; and when Y^ehowah your God delivers them before your face, then you will defeat them and you will utterly destroy [lit., devote] them. You will not make a covenant with them and you will not show any favor to them. Furthermore, you will not intermarry with them; you will not give your daughters to their sons, nor will you take their daughters for your sons. For they will turn your sons away from following after Me to serve others gods; then the anger of Y^ehowah will be kindled against you and He will quickly destroy you.” (Deut. 7:1–4).

Liberals absolutely hate what God has orders because it smacks of genocide. However, there are peoples out there who are like a cancer and they must be destroyed utterly. These are people who have reached such a saturation of negative volition, which indicates great moral impurity, that God must rid the earth of these people lest they infect everyone else.

It is a very odd thing that liberals seem to understand “abortion” and are fine with the destruction of millions of fetuses; but, the idea of destroying an entire people—no matter how degenerate they are—liberals cannot grasp that.

We know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump. We know that corruption can spread so much that it can result in nearly everyone being destroyed (as in the end days of the earth before the flood).

We need to bear that in mind as believers in the United States, as we are close to that tipping point where there are about 50% of the people who are either anti-God or anti-Bible doctrine (some of these are obviously believers). And they have chosen to follow the same evil principles, which is revealed by who they vote for (who we vote for here in the United States is *not* the problem but a symptom of the underlying problem).

There has been a concerted effort in this country, which has taken place in both Hollywood films and television, as well as in the schools, to make homosexuality completely acceptable—to the point where, if a young man of age 11 or 12 or 13 wants to give it a try, there is nothing wrong with that—so is the prevailing wisdom of our current culture. This is an example of how thinking which is against God pervades a society.

Contrast this with the 1940's and 1950's where girls who messed around had bad reputations. During this time period, marriage between virgins was common. The idea of an 11 or 12 or 13 year old male or female having sex in any way was completely out of the question. It just did not occur. And that a school counselor would encourage a person of that age to experiment sexually—such a school counselor would have been arrested, tried and thrown in jail.

By destroying these people, God is wiping out a cancer.

People who dislike the Bible, often cite genocide as one of the reasons that they hate the Bible. However, this is merely a mask for their negative volition. In most cases, these people never research why God required the Jews to practice genocide.

The Bible and Genocide

1. The God of the Bible clearly and unequivocally calls for the complete destruction of some groups of peoples. Deut. 7:1–2 20:17

The Bible and Genocide

2. And prior to the creation of nation Israel, God destroyed the corrupted human race in Gen. 6–8 and He destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah in Gen. 19.
3. Part of this is the principle that a little leaven leavens the whole lump. That is, some sins begin to be taken up by others, and this spreads throughout a society.
4. We have seen this in our own society with regards to drug usage, where a **2012 survey** determined that 24 million people over the age of 12 had used drugs in the previous month. This is obviously a huge problem within a nation. Ambition disappears, productivity lessens, accidents increase, along with a host of other problems.
5. The people of Canaan had reached a saturation point of evil. In the time of Abraham, Abraham had many well-established good relationships with Jebusites, Hittites and Philistines; but, by the time of Moses, these people had become greatly debauched.
6. Let me give you an example from the Ammonites, a people from outside of the early boundaries of Israel which Israel fought against. They had a **statue of Moloch**, and you will see that there is a place for a fire. The metallic statue would be heated up to where it was glowing, and then newborn babies would be laid into the arms of the statue to burn. Sometimes, the **parents would fornicate to the screams of the child** as it died. **Graphic** is from **CARM.org**, accessed September 28, 2013.
7. This is an example of the kinds of things which were practiced by the people of the land of Canaan at the time that Israel came into the land.
8. In World War II, Satan had inspired Nazis to the point where they were gathering up Jews and others and putting them into concentration camps, where they were experimented on and exterminated. When a society reaches a point where this kind of evil can take place, that society must be either destroyed or the cancerous element completely cut out of it.
9. Concerning the people of the land, God spoke many times, condemning their behaviors. Moses said, **“Do not intermarry with them. Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons, because they will turn your sons away from Me to worship other gods. Then the LORD’s anger will burn against you, and He will swiftly destroy you. Instead, this is what you are to do to them: tear down their altars, smash their standing pillars, cut down their Asherah poles, and burn up their carved images.”** (Deut. 7:3–5; HCSB). See also Ex. 23:24 34:13–14 Num. 35:52 Deut. 12:2–3. This indicates that the people of Canaan were involved in many kinds of false worship, unrelated to Y^ehowah worship; and likely much more similar to the Moloch worship cited above.
10. That their worship involved child sacrifice is confirmed in Lev. 18:21 20:1–5 Deut. 12:31 18:10.



For this reason, God required that these people be completely removed, like a cancer, from the land.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Application: We need to bear this in mind, as we could be a cancer which God wipes out as well.

V. 16 reads **You will not keep anyone alive from the cities that Jehovah your God has given to you as your inheritance.** Quite obviously,³⁷ there were some specific people who were allowed to live by God’s decree. One of the most prominent of these is Rahab the prostitute (Joshua 6:17–21).

³⁷ I saw obviously, referring to other portions of Scripture.

Deuteronomy 20:17a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
châram (כָּרַח) [pronounced <i>khaw-RAHM</i>]	<i>to completely devote to, to devote to, to devote to God via complete and total annihilation, to utterly destroy, to dedicate to destruction</i>	Hiphil infinitive absolute	Strong's #2763 BDB #355
<p>The infinitive absolute has four uses: ❶ when found alone, it sometimes acts as an English gerund, so that we may add <i>ing</i> to the end of the verb; ❷ When found directly before its verbal cognate, it serves to intensify or strengthen the action or the meaning of the verb which follows; ❸ When it follows its cognate verb, it emphasizes the duration or the continuation of the verbal idea; and, ❹ it is sometimes used as a substitute for a finite verb form.³⁸</p>			
châram (כָּרַח) [pronounced <i>khaw-RAHM</i>]	<i>to completely devote to, to devote to, to devote to God via complete and total annihilation, to utterly destroy, to dedicate to destruction</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #2763 BDB #355
Chittîy (חִיטִּי) [pronounced <i>khiht-TEE</i>]	a descendant of Heth; transliterated <i>Hittite</i>	gentilic adjective; with the definite article	Strong's #2850 BDB #366
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or וּ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'Ĕmôrîy (אֱמֹרִי) [pronounced <i>eh-moh-REE</i>]	<i>mountaineer</i> (possibly); and is transliterated <i>Amorite</i>	gentilic adjective; with the definite article	Strong's #567 BDB #57

Translation: *At that time, you will utterly destroy them [by devoting them to a godly destruction]: the Hittite and the Amorite,...* This destruction is by order of God. It is clear and unmistakable.

The ideal plan is that the Israelites destroy these indigenous peoples entirely. However, since they will not, they are warned not to intermarry. Obviously you cannot intermarry with a nation whose population has been thoroughly and completely destroyed. *And Moses said to them, "Have you spared all the women? Look, these [women] caused the sons of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to trespass in the matter of Peor, so the plague was among the congregation of Y^ehowah. Now, therefore, kill every male among the little ones and kill every woman who has known man intimately. However, all the females who have not known man intimately, keep for yourselves."* (Num. 31:15–18).

There is a lot of war throughout the Bible, and there is no indication that man is going to suddenly become civilized and no longer engage in war. In case you think that is going to ever happen, view the [website Wars in the World](#), and you will see just **how many wars are occurring right now**.

³⁸ *Biblical Hebrew*; Page Kelley; William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., ©1992, pp. 184–185.

In the United States, in the year 2013, as I revisit this doctrine, the current president first said that he was ready to bomb the Syrian government for using poison gas, then he went to Congress (which was on recess) and said that he would get their backing (which he would not have), and now, Obama has put this matter in the hands of his Secretary of State and Putin of Russia. Since we live in a democracy, and vote, it is worthwhile to try to figure out, when is it right to go to war?

Bear in mind that, 99.999% of the time, we are not going to be in the position to determine whether or not we, as a nation, go to war. Even in a democracy like ours, we do not vote to go to war. What if your country is on the wrong side? What if you are a coward? I will answer those questions in this doctrine.

What is a Righteous War?

1. Introductory points:

- 1) We are under the authority of the government of the nation in which we are born. God has placed these authorities over us, and we are subject to these authorities. Rom. 13
- 2) Jesus, when He spoke to the Roman soldier, said, "Not in all Israel have I found such a great faith." Jesus did not tell this Roman soldier, "Now, to be perfect, you need to lay aside your weapon of war and follow Me." This man, a soldier in Caesar's army—a centurion, a man in authority, was fine right where he was, and Jesus did not suggest any further steps which he needed to take. Matt. 8:5–10
- 3) Therefore, when our nation calls upon us to go to war, we go to war. 99.9% of the time, that is our correct decision with regards to going to war.
- 4) Now, what if you disagree with the man in command? What if you think the president is a doofus? Paul, under Roman rule, tells us that those in authority over us are placed there by God, and we ought to obey them. Rom. 13
- 5) Let's say you are under an incredibly unjust government and they want you to go to war, what do you do? Let's say, your government is on the wrong side in a war, what do you do? Or your government begins the wholesale slaughter of its own citizens, what do you do? These are some very rare situations for the average believer. If you have believed in Jesus Christ, and you believe in your heart of hearts that your country is completely wrong and the enemy is complete right, then the Bible also tells us what to do—renounce your own nation and join the enemy. Here is where Jane Fonda was wrong (Jane Fonda was an actress who went to our enemies during the Vietnam War and allowed herself to be photographed for propaganda purposes). She did not want to stop being an American; she was not willing to renounce her citizenship and the benefits of her citizenship. She was not willing to use her money and go to North Vietnam and say, "I want to become a part of your nation. I am willing to support you in any way that I can; I want to become one of you." All she was willing to do was to work against her own nation, and yet remain a part of America and continue to reap the benefits from being an American. On the other hand, Rahab the prostitute worked with Israel and Joshua against her own country and became a part of Israel (Joshua 2 Matt. 1:5). Had Israel failed, she would have died as a traitor to her own country. She threw in with the enemy of her country 100%; she did not straddle any fences.
- 6) The situation of Rahab is quite rare for the believer.
- 7) What if your country is only so-so as a country and you just do not like the idea of the wars we are engaged in? When Paul laid down the law when it came to being under the authority of national leaders, he was a citizen of Rome. He would eventually be decapitated by this government. He still supported Roman authority. Rom. 13
- 8) There has to be more to your opposition than, "I don't believe in war." We as believers do not get that luxury. We know that war is going to continue to be a part of our experience; that there will always be wars and rumors of wars, and that nowhere in the Bible are we given an out to conveniently support our enemies while remaining beneficiaries of our own country.
- 9) Let say that you are a coward, and the draft has been reinstated, and war has broken out. What do you do? You have to obey the laws of the land and go into the military. At some point in time, before your location is determined, you need to privately make your cowardice known to your superior officers. There is justification in the Bible for removing cowards from the military. Ideally,

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you should jockey for a non-combat, support position, and there are thousands of such positions. After that, you allow God to determine where you end up.

2. The Bible does not anywhere encourage us to be conscientious objectors or to oppose war as a general principle. Jesus had the perfect opening when speaking to the Roman soldier, but He did not take it because the Bible does not support conscientious objectors, not is God completely against war.
3. It is certainly helpful when the population supports a war, does not protest against a war, and is unified against our enemies. We fought a disastrous war in Vietnam, a war which divided the country, and a war where the United States suffered its first defeat. One movie star—Jane Fonda—showed her approval of the acts of our enemies, and allowed her picture to be taken while on an enemy tank which was used to kill American soldiers. Other Americans sent blood to our enemies. No doubt, the marching protestors against this war had a hand in the defeat of their own country in war, and the slaughter of approximately 3 million people by the Communists which followed our retreat. Given this turmoil, we need to understand when war is justified.
4. Most people would understand that going to war after being attacked is justified. There are a significant number out there who, if we suffered another attack similar to 9/11, would blame this attack on America and our support of Israel or our presence in the Middle East; but, the majority of Americans would support military action against whatever movement or country attacked us. Only a very small number of Christians would suggest that those in the United States *turn the other cheek* because that is what Jesus would have done (in their own minds). It is important to understand that, *turn the other cheek* applies to retaliation because of a personal vendetta.
5. In the Old Testament, much of the time, God would guide Israel to go to war against certain nations. We do not have this same guidance. If some president said that God told him to go to war against nation X, we would vote him out of office.
6. However, there is evidence in the Old Testament as to what sort of wars we as a nation ought to be involved in.
7. God told Abraham that this land which He gave his progeny would not be a reality until the iniquity of the Amorites became full (Gen. 15:16). At that point in time, *Amorite* meant *westerner*, and this referred to the peoples who inhabited the Land of Promise which God gave to Abraham (the Amorites were also a specific people in that region as well). When Abraham came into this land, most of the peoples there were okay. Many were unbelievers, but they were not degenerate unbelievers (with the exception of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah). When their iniquity became full-blown, then God would give their land to the seed of Abraham.
8. Abraham's seed also had to become a significant population as well. So we have two things which have to come to pass: (1) a significant number of Jews who believe in Jesus Christ who are willing to trust in God and (2) the people in the land God has given the Jews have to reach a tipping point of degeneracy. 40 years after Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt, both of these things came to pass.
9. How does this relate to our topic? Israel had to have an army; the people that they were going to destroy had to have transgressed more than just occupying the land which Israel wanted. Together, these things resulted in a series of wars and battles, from the time of Joshua to the time of David, when Israel secured much of the land which God had given them. God had not decided that Palestine belonged to the Jews and that He would simply destroy anyone living in this land in order to give it over to the Jews.
10. When the Jews took the land under Joshua, they were to offer terms of peace first (Deut. 20:10 Joshua 9:15 10:1 11:19). Quite obviously, this would be overruled by a direct command from God (Joshua 6). Since God is omniscient, God knows the hearts of the people of the cities where Israel would invade. If they are 100% in negative volition toward God, then Israel did not need to offer them terms of peace.
11. What was the main problem with every evil nation in the land of Palestine? Idolatry, which led to either immoral or moral degeneracy.
12. You recognize evil in some nations by whom they choose to ally themselves with. Although I know a little about the history of Nazi Germany, I know almost nothing about Japan's pre-WWII history. However, I recognize that if Japan chose to ally themselves with Nazi Germany, then that reveals their true colors.
13. Similarly, we know the heart of a country based upon whom they identify as their enemies. When

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thousands of Muslims in Palestine, Lebanon, Syria or Iran march in the streets, burn American flags and shout, "Death to America," we know where their hearts are.

- 1) Now, you may think that this is unfair, and that we should not always identify the people with their leaders, as their leaders can be despots. God gives a people the leader they deserve or a leader who is appropriate for them.
 - 2) Think about our last 3 presidents (I write in 2013) and their greatest weaknesses. President Clinton strove to be popular, followed the polls, and often did the popular thing—which indicates no core values. His acts of immorality in office and his attempt to cover them up (along with a lifetime of such acts) did not substantively hurt his popularity, even when he flat out lied to the public. This is a reflection of us, the people. After him is President George Bush, who began strong, recognizing our common enemy (whom Clinton did not fully recognize), recognize that we were at war, and took steps to deal with it. However, in moving ahead with 2 reasonably popular wars, these wars were not over fast enough, and much of the public began to moan and groan, as if this affected them directly. All they really suffered was seeing it on tv night after night after night. Although Bush remained steadfast in his opposition to terrorism and to the correct outcome of these two wars, he went haywire when it came to the economy—and when he was right (about FNMA, about social security), our other leaders stood up against him. And he is followed by President Obama, who was elected primarily because he can speak well with a teleprompter, can dance around both sides of almost any issue (our news reporters call this *taking a nuanced position*), and exudes an attractive personage. Within a few months, he has proposed a mountain of debt tied to worthless spending unlike anyone has ever seen before and yet there are a significant portion of our population who refuses to recognize it because he is *Obama*. So you see how reflective our leaders are of the population?
 - 3) Of course, the examples I gave were from a democracy, but bear in mind, God is in charge, and God places appropriate leaders in charge of nations.
 - 4) Iran is not a democracy, and its leader is this tiny crazy person who denies the holocaust (I wrote that in 2011; he has since been replaced). Although many have tried to distinguish Ahmadinejad from the Iranian people, these people still flood the streets, celebrate 9/11, shout "Death to America" for hours, and desire to see Israel destroyed. Ahmadinejad is their appropriate figurehead and leader. Obviously, there is a significant number of Iranians who are pro-American, but there has been no power shift as of yet (I wrote that in the year 2009). Today (2013) there is a more moderate-sounding president of Iran, but the exact same people are still in charge above him. As of today (September 20, 2013), this *moderate leader* is making overtures to President Obama to have more talks, which suggests that they are getting to the point at which Israel will have to strike them to destroy their nuclear program (talks with Obama would give them temporary immunity, which is what they are after). This new figurehead leader has been chosen to try to sell this to President Obama, whose understanding of anything is greatly lacking.
14. Furthermore, we know which countries are white hats based upon whom they choose to ally themselves with. We have alliances with nations such as Mexico, Canada, England, France, Germany, Japan and Britain (to name a few); their choosing to associate with us and to ally themselves with us tells us about their people and governments.
 15. In this 2Sam. 8, Syria (Aram) will ally themselves with Hadadezer and war with David. King Toi, from the same region, will honor David when he defeats Hadadezer. This tells us about the hearts of the people and governments in this chapter at this time—those who ally themselves with David are blessed of God and those who chose to war against David are cursed by God.
 16. Note that God did not have Israel continually acting in a hostile manner against her neighbors. God did not put Israel into a 24/7/365 war mode. Egypt was continually in idolatry. God warned Israel not to go to Egypt or to depend upon Egypt, but God did not tell Israel, "You need to raise up your army and go destroy Egypt." God did send Israel to war on many occasions against her enemies, but not against all of her enemies. At the time of Jeremiah, God expected His people to place themselves under the authority of Assyrian king Nebuchadnezzar, who had just conquered Israel. There was a remnant in the land, under Gedaliah as their governor and under Jeremiah as their spiritual leader. God did not tell them

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- to rebel against Nebuchadnezzar; God expected them to submit themselves to Nebuchadnezzar's rule.
17. Let's apply all of this to today. God has not told any of us or any of our leaders to invade this or that nation, but let's just suppose that is somehow our decision—how do we make such a decision?
- 1) When someone goes to war against us, we have two choices: we either give up and place ourselves under their authority or we fight to preserve our freedom. Most of the time, God had Israel fight for her freedom (the book of Judges). However, in the case of Nebuchadnezzar, the people of Israel who remained alive were not to rebel against him; they were to submit to his authority. The same would have been true of the Jews under Roman rule. Rome crushed Israel because of her rebellion, but allowed Christianity to flourish, despite some heavy persecution in the beginning. Determining when to fight and when to lay down your weapons and submit requires spiritual maturity.
 - 2) There are characteristics of the heathen in Palestine which are still here today: idolatry which leads to human and, particularly, child sacrifice—that is evil and is to be wiped out. You may protest and say, "No one out there is engaging in child sacrifice—not as a country." However, when you raise your children to hate Israel and to hate America; and you raise them to commit themselves to suicide missions through cartoons and constant propaganda, and they are to do this for the glory of Allah, that is modern-day child sacrifice. Some have even strapped bombs to children and detonated them. This is highly degenerate (religious degeneracy), and it is reasonable to suppose that if God had Israel destroy peoples like this in their day, that such an enemy is fair game for us today. www.obsessionthemovie.com or <http://obsessionthemovie.com/27minversion.php>
 - 3) Along the same lines, wanton murder by any government of its own citizenry (by Muslim fanatics or by Communists or by Nazis) is justification by itself for a righteous nation to step in. The Nazis killed millions of Jews and Christians; and the Communists have killed tens of millions of those who would not go along with their program (mostly those who believe in God; Christians and Jews and those of other religions). Wars against such forces of evil are righteous wars. In other words, our wars in Korea and Vietnam were as righteous as our war against the Nazis. When we pulled out of Vietnam, this was unrighteousness, and what followed was a bloodbath which far, far exceeded in a couple of years the number of casualties over a 16 year long war. In this alone, we know that we were right to fight against the bloody Communists and that we should have defeated them (and, in case you did not know, even one of the top generals in North Vietnam was only weeks or months away from surrendering to the United States when we pulled out).
 - 4) It is important to recognize that we are in a spiritual battle and that Satan is the god of this world, and his plans and deeds are not difficult to understand. We can choose to ignore them and our news services may ignore them, but much of his activity in the world is not difficult to discern. When you see the Word of God being suppressed and children being sacrificed and children being raised to hate, you know Satan is at work and has captured the hearts of much of the population where such things are taking place.
 - 5) When people reached a tipping point of degeneracy, God used Israel to destroy them—sometimes, every man, woman and child. Men with spiritual insight need to be able to recognize when this tipping point has been reached. This is one reason God has given us the Old Testament, so that by seeing Satan's work in the Old Testament, we are able to recognize it in our contemporary world.
 - 6) In a democracy, as we live in here, we need to elect leaders who are believers and who have a reasonable world-view. It should be clear that they are not given in to delusions, e.g., being able to *smooth-talk* our enemies; and they should demonstrate a clear understanding of America's Christian heritage and future. Such men may not be doctrinally sound, but they may understand enough to be reasonable leaders.
18. Summary:
- 1) Satan exists and his hatred and ferocity are well-known. Although Satan is quite able to be subtle and present himself as an angel of light, he is also willing to take center stage when it comes to leading a nation dedicated to him. What I mean is, a honest appraisal of a nation makes it clear that they are led by Satan; this is not something which is carefully hidden. Anyone who has some historical knowledge of Communism, Nazism or of radical Islamic fascism recognizes how evil these

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ideologies are. Just yesterday, a suicide attack was carried out in Pakistan, against a Mosque, so that a maximum number of people could be killed or injured. 50 people were killed. Islamic fascists love to target innocent Muslims and innocent people in general. It should not take a spiritual genius to recognize that is absolute evil.

- 2) God uses certain nations to defeat and sometimes to destroy nations which have become dangerous cancers in this world.
- 3) God originally used Israel to defeat and destroy evil nations; and now He primarily uses client nations (nations in which a significant portion of the people believe in Jesus Christ and where Bible doctrine is taught and from which missionaries emanate).
- 4) War is an integral part of human history; its horror duly noted. Still, we will never see the end of warfare until the Millennium. All of the marching in the world and all of the peace protests will never change this. In fact, in many cases, this will give comfort and enthusiasm to our enemies, and increase the length of war, the determination of our enemy, and the body count of our own soldiers.
- 5) When a person decides to *march for peace*, they need to recognize that they will probably increase the number of deaths and lengthen the war they are marching against. Vietnam is a prime example of that. One of the military leaders of the North Vietnam army (General Giap) has written about that era, and was amazed that we pulled out of Vietnam. He admits that they were months if not weeks away from surrendering. Had we remained a few more months, we would have been victorious and literally millions of lives would have been saved (these are the lives of people who trusted us and who desired freedom, as well as the lives of many innocents). Our pulling out of Vietnam was an act of evil and cowardice, and many died because of it.
- 6) Going to peace marches is more of an expression of self-righteousness than anything else.
- 7) Nations which serve Satan will be anti-God, anti-Semitic and/or anti-freedom.
- 8) When they raise their children to be sacrificed in order to promote Satan's agenda (which is anti-God, anti-Semitic and anti-freedom), they are equivalent to a nation which sacrifices its children to some false idol. The Hitlarian youth; young people not only schooled in Communism, but schooled in a world domination by Communism; Muslim children brought up to hate and with a desire to kill Jews, Americans or Brits for Allah, indicate that a nation has reached a dangerous tipping point.
- 9) Such a nation needs to be, at minimum, contained; and, at maximum, destroyed.
- 10) *When* do such nations need to be destroyed? When their iniquity is full. This is one of the reasons why we study the Old Testament—ot be able to correctly make such an assessment.
- 11) Evil nations are a cancer in society and their evil is spread throughout their own nation and sometimes throughout the world. Radical Muslims are an example of this, an in this past decade, have launched thousands of attacks in hundreds of countries throughout the world. Since our news ignores this, I suggest you go to www.thereligionofpeace.com to see what they are up to this past month. You may be surprised as to how many attacks by radical Muslims occur daily.
- 12) Watch <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6-3X5hIFXYU> so see how the world we live in can be changed in a few decades by this evil mindset.
- 13) When we know the heart of one nation, we can determine the heart of other nations by whom they choose to ally themselves with and whom they choose to identify as enemies.
- 14) Since we, as Americans, living in democracy, really have little or no say in determining whether or not we ought to go to war; we can rest assured that it is a war of God—a righteous war—if it is against a people who are anti-God, anti-Christian, anti-Semitic and/or anti-freedom.
- 15) Finally, I would argue that such wars—wars of choice—are more important and consequential than wars of defense against an immediate attack. Before we were attacked at Pearl Harbor, we should have recognized how evil Nazis were, who began to move against allies of ours.
- 16) Killing our enemies—and killing as many as possible of them—often results in fewer deaths and shortened wars. Most historians agree that when President Truman used atomic weapons against Japan, this shortened the war and probably reduced the total number of casualties.
- 17) As God is with David in the wars enumerated in this chapter (2Sam. 8:14b), so God will be with us as individuals and with our nation as a corporate entity.
19. You may think that much of this doctrine is an anti-Muslim rant. To some degree, it is. But I use them

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as an example during this period of time. 50 years from now, there will be possibly another group of people, just as evil and just as menacing. I believe that Bible doctrine is easier to understand when we take into consideration modern-day applications.

20. And in case you did not know this, we have one of the greatest militaries of our history serving the United States today. Even the soldiers of our allies cannot compare to our own military. A few months ago, British soldiers were captured by Iran and they allowed themselves to be used for propaganda purposes, although what they faced for the most part was, psychological warfare after being captured. The professionalism and heroism of our soldiers (almost totally ignored by our media) is an incredible blessing from God, and it reveals how closely God is working with the United States.

The weakness of the churches today is, there is not enough taught by way of mechanics and by way of application of Bible doctrine. Too many church-goers lack personal integrity and lack appreciation for our military.

Nations function as a corporate witness before God. A nation which kills its own people, which stifles freedom (particularly religious freedom) and which is anti-Semitic is cursed by God. Nations where there is freedom, where people believe in Jesus Christ, where the Word of God is taught, are nations which are blessed by God. There are times in human history where those nations blessed by God will be called upon to defeat and even to destroy cancerous nations cursed by God.

This doctrine was originally found in **2Sam. 8** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)). Some slight updating was done.

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Deuteronomy 20:17b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
K ^e na'ănîy (כְּנַעֲנִי) [pronounced k ^e -nah-ġuh-NEE]	<i>merchant, trader; and is transliterated Canaanite, Canaanites</i>	adjective/nominative gentilic; with the definite article	Strong's #3669 BDB #489
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wāw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
P ^e rizzîy (פְּרִזִּי) [pronounced p ^e r-ihz-ZEE]	<i>which possibly means belonging to a village; rural population, rustics; and is transliterated Perizzite</i>	gentilic adjective with the definite article	Strong's #6522 BDB #827

Translation: ...the Canaanite and the Perizzite,... In Israel, there are several cancers growing, including the Hittite and the Amorite (both named in v. 17a), and here, the Canaanite and the Perizzite. Throughout the Pentateuch, we have various lists of the people in this land, and there may be five listed together and there may be ten of them listed in total.

Deuteronomy 20:17c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
Chivvîy (חִיִּוִּי) [pronounced <i>khihv-VEE</i>]	<i>villagers</i> , transliterated <i>Hivite</i>	masculine singular, gentilic adjective; with the definite article	Strong's #2340 BDB #295
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, וְ) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
Y ^e bûçîy (יְבוּסִי) [pronounced <i>y^evoo-SEE</i>]	an inhabitant or descendant of Jebus; transliterated <i>Jebusite</i>	adjective gentilic with the definite article	Strong's #2983 BDB #101

Translation: ...the Hivite and the Jebusite...

The list of names here is one of many lists of groups of people who lived in the Land of Promise.

Thumbnail Sketches of the Groups Living in the Land of Promise

The People	Thumbnail Sketch
The Hittites	Although Abraham had a good relationship with at least some individual Hittites, this group became more and more hostile to Israel as time went on. Interestingly enough, even though the Hittites are mentioned more often in Scripture than the Jebusites, this is primarily because several specific Hittites are named. The Hittites were also descended from Canaan and they first settled the city of Hebron after moving out west.
The Amorites	These lived in the mountains of Canaan whereas the Canaanites lived in the lowlands. However, they later moved into the rich pasture lands <i>south of the Jabbok, bounded by the Jabbok on the north, the Arnon on the south, the Jordan on the west and "the wilderness" on the east.</i> ³⁹ Of this group, these are named the most often in the Old Testament (85 times compared to the Canaanites being mentioned 69 times).
The Canaanites	The Canaanites refer to a specific people who settled the land of Canaan; but also, in a more general sense, to take in the various peoples who settled this land (some of whom were descended from Canaan).
The Perizzites	The Perizzites are probably the least known of this group, being found only in association with other peoples. When Abraham and Lot were having problems, we are told that the Canaanite and the Perizzite was in the land at this time (Gen. 13:7). They are mentioned only with the Canaanites again in Gen. 34:30; and twice when they are named, the <i>giants</i> are the next ones named (Gen. 15:20 Joshua 17:15).
The Hivites	<i>Hivites</i> means <i>villagers</i> and they are descended from the Canaanites.
The Jebusites	The Jebusites occupied the mountain upon which Jerusalem sits and were not removed until King David removed them (2Sam. 5:6–9). They are named nearly 40 times in Scripture.

Because of Israel's shaky spiritual state, God left many of these people in the land to test Israel (Judges 2:16–23). These people were to be destroyed by Israel.

³⁹ Dr. William Smith, *Smith's Bible Dictionary*; 1894; from e-Sword, topic: The Amorites.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Deuteronomy 20:17d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kaph or k ^e (כ) [pronounced k ^e]	<i>like, as, just as; according to, after; about, approximately</i>	preposition of comparison, resemblance or approximation	No Strong's # BDB #453
'āsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
Together, ka'āsher (כֹּאֲשֶׁר) [pronounced kah-uh-SHER] means <i>as which, as one who, as, like as, just as; because; according to what manner, in a manner as</i> . Back in 1Sam. 12:8, I rendered this <i>for example</i> .			
tsāvāh (צִוָּה) [pronounced tsaw-VAW]	<i>to commission, to mandate, to appoint; to ordain; to lay charge upon, to give charge to, charge, command, order; to instruct [as in, giving an order]</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, Piel perfect, 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6680 BDB #845
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly y ^h oh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217
'Ēlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced el-o-HEEM]	<i>God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #430 BDB #43

Translation: ...—as Y^ehowah your Elohim has commanded you. God had clearly commanded the Israelites to destroy the peoples of the land of Canaan. They were to be completely devoted to God for destruction.

Moses earlier in his teaching had clearly laid out what the Israelites would be required to do: *When Yahweh your God will bring you into the land where you go to possess it, and will cast out many nations before you, the Hittite, and the Gergashite, and the Amorite, and the Canaanite, and the Perizzite, and the Hivite, and the Jebusite, seven nations greater and mightier than you; and when Yahweh your God will deliver them up before you, and you will strike them; then you will completely destroy them: you will make no covenant with them, nor show mercy to them; neither will you make marriages with them; your daughter you will not give to his son, nor his daughter will you take to your son. For he will turn away your son from following me, that they may serve other gods: so will the anger of Yahweh be kindled against you+, and he will destroy you quickly. But thus you+ will deal with them: you+ will break down their altars, and dash in pieces their pillars, and cut down their Asherim, and burn their graven images with fire.* (Deut. 7:1–5; Updated Bible Version 2.11)

Calvin: *For God had appointed the Canaanites to be destroyed, and made the Israelites the executors of his will.*⁴⁰

Israel understood its responsibility and accepted it. Num. 21:1–3 *And the Canaanite, the king of Arad, who dwelt in the South, heard that Israel came by the way of Atharim; and he fought against Israel, and took some of them captive. And Israel vowed a vow to Yahweh, and said, If you will indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I*

⁴⁰ John Calvin, *Calvin's Commentary on the Bible*; 2nd beta version from e-Sword, Deut. 20:15.

will completely destroy their cities. And Yahweh listened to the voice of Israel, and delivered up the Canaanites; and they completely destroyed them and their cities: and the name of the place was called Hormah. (Updated Bible Version 2.11). These people in the land practiced a great many detestable things: You will not do so to Yahweh your God: for every disgusting thing to Yahweh, which he hates, they have done to their gods; for even their sons and their daughters do they burn in the fire to their gods. (Deut. 12:31, Updated Bible Version 2.11) This is how degenerate these people were. They actually sacrificed up their own sons and daughters to their gods. They put their own children into fire to appease the gods. Therefore, God told Moses to say to the children of Israel: When you+ pass over the Jordan into the land of Canaan, then you+ will drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you+, and destroy all their figured [stones], and destroy all their molten images, and demolish all their high places: and you+ will take possession of the land, and dwell in it; for to you+ I have given the land to possess it. (Num. 33:51b–53; Updated Bible Version 2.11)

These groups of people were degenerate beyond the ability to reform. Five hundred years prior to this, the iniquities of this people had not reached a saturation point (Gen. 15:16). However, at the time of Deuteronomy, these nations had entered into great human depravity, practicing sexual deviations and human sacrifice—both of which were often closely associated with their worship of the gods. Recall that the demons at one time had physical contact with the human race and bore a race of half-human, half-angelic creatures. It is this precedent of sensuality that the peoples of the Land of Promise aspired to, being influenced by these demons who could no longer cohabit with man. They were a cancer on society and God determined that they were to be completely removed before they infected the rest of the human race. They had become such a saturation of evil, that God said, “For the land has become defiled, therefore I have visited its punishment upon it, so that the land would vomit out its inhabitants.” (Lev. 18:25). Their deviations, which included child sacrifice and homosexuality and bestiality are listed in the Lev. 18 context. “Take personal responsibility that you do not make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land into which you are going, so that it not become a snare in your midst. But, you will tear down their alters and smash their pillars and cut down their Asherim. For you will not worship any other god, for Y^ehowah, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God. So you do not make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land and they play the harlot with their gods, and sacrifice to their gods and someone invite you to eat of his sacrifice, and you take some of his daughters for you sons and his daughters play the harlot with their gods, and cause your sons to play the harlot with their gods.” (Ex. 34:12–16). And they completely destroyed everything in the city, both man and woman, young and old, and ox and sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword [with the exception of Rahab and her family].” (Joshua 6:21). However, sometimes, only the people were destroyed: And they struck every person who was in [Hazor] with the edge of the sword completely destroying; there was no one left who breathed. And he burned Hazor with fire. And all the spoil of these cities and their cattle, the sons of Israel took as their plunder; but they struck every man with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them. They left no one who breathed.” (Joshua 11:11, 14).

Satan preyed upon the Israelites through the survivors of the nations Israel was to completely destroy. The Israelites were easily influenced by evil religion; therefore the peoples of the land were known as a *snare* to Israel (Ex. 23:33 Deut. 7:16 12:30).

Deuteronomy 20:18a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
<p>לְמַעַן (לְמַעַן) [pronounced l^e-MAH- gahn]</p>	<p>for the sake of, on account of, to the intent of, to the intent that, to the purpose that, in order that, in view of, to the end that; so that</p>	<p>compound preposition and substantive which acts like a preposition</p>	<p>Strong's #4616 BDB #775</p>

This is the substantive ma'an (מַעַן) [pronounced MAH-gahn], which means *purpose, intent*, combined with the lamed preposition (which is the only way that it is found in Scripture).

Deuteronomy 20:18a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
<p>From the NET Bible footnote for Psalm 51:4: The Hebrew term <i>l^ema'an</i> (למען) [pronounced <i>l^e-MAH-ġahn</i>] normally indicates purpose ("in order that"), but here it introduces a logical consequence of the preceding statement. (Taking the clause as indicating purpose here would yield a theologically preposterous idea - the psalmist purposely sinned so that God's justice might be vindicated!) For other examples of <i>l^ema'an</i> (למען) [pronounced <i>l^e-MAH-ġahn</i>] indicating result, see 2 Kings 22:17 Jer 27:15 Amos 2:7.</p>			
<i>ʾāsher</i> (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
<p>Together, when followed by an imperfect, they mean <i>to the end that</i>. However, when they are followed by a perfect tense, we will render these words as <i>because that</i>.</p>			
<i>lōʾ</i> (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced <i>low</i>]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
<i>lāmad</i> (לָמַד) [pronounced <i>law-MAHD</i>]	<i>to train, to accustom, to teach</i>	3 rd person masculine plural, Piel imperfect	Strong's #3925 BDB #540
<i>ʾēth</i> (אֶת) [pronounced <i>ayth</i>]	<i>you; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to, toward</i>	sign of the direct object affixed to a 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
<i>lāmed</i> (ל) [pronounced <i>l^e</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
<i>ʾāsâh</i> (עָשָׂה) [pronounced <i>ġaw-SAWH</i>]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
<i>kaph</i> or <i>k^e</i> (כּ) [pronounced <i>k^e</i>]	<i>like, as, according to; about, approximately</i>	preposition	No Strong's # BDB #453
<i>kôl</i> (כֹּל) [pronounced <i>kohl</i>]	with a plural noun, it is rendered <i>all of, all; any of</i>	masculine singular construct with a masculine plural noun	Strong's #3605 BDB #481
<p><i>K^e kôl</i> (כֹּל) appear to mean <i>as all, according to all, just as all, exactly as all</i>.</p>			
<i>tôw'êvâh</i> (תּוֹעֵבָה) [pronounced <i>to-ġay-VAWH</i>]	<i>disgusting act, an abomination, abhorrent, an abhorrent act</i>	feminine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #8441 BDB #1072
<p>Originally, this word was used to describe how the Egyptians felt about the Jews (Gen. 43:32 46:34 Ex. 8:26). This same word was often used for the abominations committed by the heathen of the land which God told the Jews to destroy (Deut. 18:9, 12 20:18 2Kings 21:2 2Chron. 28:3 2Kings 21:11 2Chron. 28:3). Jews who did such an abhorrent act were to be cut off from their people (Lev. 18:29). People who committed abhorrent acts often stirred God up to anger (Deut. 32:16). This particular word was often associated with sexual degeneracy (Lev. 18:22 1Kings 14:24), with child sacrifice (Deut. 12:31 2Kings 16:3) and with the Jews going after other gods (Deut. 32:16).</p>			

Deuteronomy 20:18a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
ʾăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
ʿāsâh (עָשָׂה) [pronounced ġaw-SAWH]	<i>to do, to make, to construct, to fashion, to form, to prepare, to manufacture</i>	3 rd person plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
ʾĕlôhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced el-o-HEEM]	<i>gods, foreign gods, god; God; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i>	masculine plural noun with the 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #430 BDB #43

Translation: [This is] to the end that, they will not [be able to] teach you to do all their disgusting acts which they have done for their gods. The disgusting things which these peoples did are only occasionally noted in Scripture. It is quite interesting that the Bible never goes out of its way to justify God's judgment of this people. Some of the few times justification is given, we have general statements like this. However, we know that some of these activities included child sacrifice where they would burn their own children and then fornicate to the screaming of their own children. Sometimes, this involved a statue of Baal or Dagon or some god, and his arms would be outstretched, and the statue heated to where it burned to the touch, and there would be a fire below, and a child would be placed into these burning arms and struggle and either die in the arms or fall into a fire below. The evil that these people did was great.

John Calvin: [This] land [of promise] was consecrated to God's service, its inhabitants were to be exterminated, who could do nothing but contaminate it; and therefore this would be profitable for the Israelites, lest by their wiles they should be attracted to false superstitions.

Deuteronomy 20:18b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (וּ, or ו) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
châtâ' (חָטָא) [pronounced khaw-TAW]	<i>to sin, to miss, to miss the mark, to violate the law, to err; to do wrong, to commit a transgression</i>	2 nd person masculine plural, Qal perfect	Strong's #2398 BDB #306
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
YHWH (יהוה) [pronunciation is possibly yohh-WAH]	transliterated variously as <i>Jehovah, Yahweh, Y^ehowah</i>	proper noun	Strong's #3068 BDB #217

Deuteronomy 20:18b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
<p>ʿĒlōhîym (אֱלֹהִים) [pronounced <i>el-o-HEEM</i>]</p>	<p><i>God; gods, foreign gods, god; rulers, judges; superhuman ones, angels; transliterated Elohim</i></p>	<p>masculine plural noun with the 2nd person masculine plural suffix</p>	<p>Strong's #430 BDB #43</p>

Translation: [By letting any of them live] you will have sinned before Y^ehowah your Elohim. The Jews were to destroy the peoples of the land, with a few noted exceptions.

And now we are back to a 2nd person masculine plural suffix again.

Primarily, they were to be destroyed so that they did not corrupt the Israelites themselves. “When you enter the land which Y^ehowah your God gives you, you will not learn to imitate the detestable things of those nations.” (Deut. 8:9). “[Therefore] do not say in your heart when Y^ehowah your God has driven them out from before your face, ‘Because of my righteousness Y^ehowah has brought me in to possess this land,’ but because of the wickedness of these nations Y^ehowah is dispossessing them before your face. It is not for your righteousness or for the uprightness of you heart that you are going to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations Y^ehowah your God ds driving them out from before your face, in order to confirm the oath with Y^ehowah swore toy your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.” (Deut. 9:4–5).

This explains Joshua 9, where a people who are soon to be on a list for destruction come to Joshua and they act as if they have come from a long distance away, and they make a treaty with him. They knew enough of the Hebrew Scriptures to realize that God was going to destroy all of the peoples in the land of Canaan. They believed this. They believed in the God of Israel. However, not having any doctrine in their souls, they had to figure out, *how do we keep from getting destroyed by Joshua and his great army?* So they pretend to have come from a long distance away—from another land. Therefore, Joshua has to offer them terms of peace. Because they are from afar off, Joshua cannot simply destroy them, as per God’s commands. See **Joshua 9** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)).

Not all of God’s enemies in the land were destroyed. Joshua did completely clear out some specific areas, as we read in Joshua 10:40 *So Joshua defeated the entire land—the hill country and the Negev and the lowland and the slopes and all of their kings. He did not leave even a remnant alive of those who were breathing. He completely destroyed them just as Jehovah, the God of Israel, had commanded.* However, there were many groups of degenerate peoples still living in the land after Joshua. Some tribes of Israel allied themselves and continued to follow God’s orders (Judges 1:3–4 reads: *And Judah said to Simeon his brother, Come up with me into my lot, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I likewise will go with you into your lot. So Simeon went with him. And Judah went up; and Yahweh delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hand: and they struck of them in Bezek ten thousand men.* —Updated Bible Version 2.11), but, for the most part, the children of Israel lived side-by-side the people whom God told them to destroy (Judges 1:21–36). For a better explanation of this, see **Judges 1** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)).

The final disposition of the degenerate peoples of the land is found in 2Chron. 8:7–8 *As for all the people who were left of the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, who were not of Israel; of their sons who were left after them in the land, whom the sons of Israel did not consume, of them Solomon raised slave labor to this day.* (Updated Bible Version 2.11)

A psalmist recorded this fact: *They did not destroy the peoples, As Yahweh commanded them, But mingled themselves with the nations, And learned their works, And served their idols, Which became a snare to them. Yes, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters to demons, And shed innocent blood, Even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, Whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan; And the land was polluted with blood. Thus they were defiled with their works, And prostituted in their doings. Therefore the wrath of Yahweh was kindled*

against his people, And he was disgusted with his inheritance. And he gave them into the hand of the nations; And those who hated them ruled over them. Their enemies also oppressed them, And they were brought into subjection under their hand. (Psalm 106:34–42; Updated Bible Version 2.11) In fact, this very much describes Israel during the time of the Judges. See **Psalm 106** ([HTML](#)) ([PDF](#)).

There is a give and take between the people of God and those who occupied the Land of Promise prior to 1400 B.C. There were many times when the people of Israel fell backwards; and many times when some individuals of these Hittite, etc. groups showed great advancement (such as, Uriah the Hittite, a great military man under David, whom David had killed when David was deep in the interlocking systems of arrogance). This interplay of free will and spiritual advance change a lot of what happened between Israel and the people within the land of Canaan.

Application: How long do you think God is going to allow nations saturated with Islam to stand? Do you think that God does not notice this? Do you think that God is going to ignore them? And, as the righteous nation, what do you think our role will be? Islam is not going to stop. All the evil that you see is going to be multiplied tenfold. The killings which occur (and they occur *daily*, just in case you did not know) will also increase. If there are a billion Muslims out there, and even if only 1% of them are radicalized, that is a huge army of 10 million. And if 10% of them are radicalized, that is a massive asymmetric army of 100 million.

Application: President George W. Bush had the opportunity to change human history dramatically, had he allowed (as well as demanded) Christianity into Iraq and Afghanistan. He did not; in fact, the military policy was dramatically **against evangelization**, although evangelism could potentially have changed everything.

Application: If you have ever needed an illustrative of human good versus divine good on a massive scale, our involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan under President Bush was human good. When President Obama withdrew most of our troops from those nations (I write this in 2013), this was more human good. Human good has no eternal impact. Human good may see, wonderful and nice, but it does not have any eternal impact.

Application: However, within the confines of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, there certainly would have been actions of sin, evil, human good and divine good. Believers with doctrine would have been involved in the latter category.

Application: You may object to, or, at least question, America's involvement in evangelizing the world. If that is your thinking, look around you. Look at the great prosperity and blessing which God has heaped upon this nation. We have been virtually free of war within our borders. Today (I write this in 2013), the greatest health problem among our poor is obesity, something unheard of in other nations.

Application: The United States did not accidentally hit the lottery; God has greatly blessed us and will continue to bless us. However, this does come at a price. Do not be shocked if the asymmetric war with Islam intensifies, proportional to our lack of spiritual advance as a nation. And if we regress too much in the spiritual realm, expect a great deal of this war to take place within our borders.

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The Preservation of Natural Resources in Wartime

When examining these passages and making sense of them, one must keep in mind that these people to whom Moses is speaking have never done a lot of stuff. They have been mostly out in the desert where God has provided for all of their needs. God gave them food; He gave them water; and He kept their clothes from falling apart. Usually people learn how to do things from their parents, from a mentor and, once and awhile, from school. In the generation of promise, their parents were all dead, having died the sin unto death. Their bodies were strewn

across the desert (1Cor. 10:5). Moses was their go-to guy (along with Caleb and Joshua) when it comes to knowing how to do things. However, Moses is just one guy in a population of 2 million. So, let's say that Moses and Caleb and Joshua were going to fan out among the crowd and give each person about 30 minutes worth of training in some field. That alone would take about 40 years, day and night, with each person being in contact with only one of Moses, Joshua and Caleb for 30 minutes on one occasion.

So Moses, now and again, has to give some general guidelines for this people who lack guidelines. What Moses is saying, from time to time, has little or no moral value, but is simple telling the people of Israel, "You ought to do it this way; you should not do it that way." Now, once and awhile, these informational minutes may have an underlying spiritual meaning; but essentially, Moses is telling the people how to do some things which they have no idea how to do.

What happens in today's world is, some one who hates the Bible or hates some of the values of the Bible, and will quote something which they do not like, and then throw in some other tidbit that Moses has taught, more as a mentor or father-figure, rather than as a representative of God (he is always a representative of God to these people; but some of the things which he teaches are matters of practicality rather than of deep moral value). The hater then places the bit of information next to a moral principle and equates them. "So you say homosexuality is wrong; well, then, do you have a cotton blend shirt? You are also sinning against God."

In this example, Moses tells the people not to mix cotton and wool because, when they are washed, they behave differently. Whatever sort of garment this is, washing it would ruin it. There is no morality here; it is just a bit of common sense. People were not punished if the mixed materials, except insofar as, after the first washing, the piece of clothing had to be thrown away because it was messed up. However, those who engaged in homosexual behavior were executed; so that is clearly a moral issue.

If mixed threads is not a moral issue, why is it found in the Bible? This question will be answered further down in a doctrine.

I think that it is unlikely that every word that Moses taught—even in this final month of his life—was recorded. I think that some things were recorded simply so we understand the gist of this sort of instruction; and that some of these things actually looked forward to Jesus Christ or to His crucifixion.

With regards to this next verse, this is one of the few times I referred to other translations to try to figure out the meaning of the final sentence. However, in viewing the variety of translations, I found out that I have not been the only person to be stumped by the words found here.

When you besiege unto a city days many to battle against her to lay hold of her, you will not destroy her tree to cast down upon her an ax, for from him you will eat and them you will not cut down, for the man, a tree of the field to come in from your faces in the siege.

Deuteronomy
20:19

When you besiege a city [for] many days, to battle against it, to take possession of it, you will not destroy its forest, to bring the ax down upon it. [This is] because you will eat from it [the forest] and [therefore] you will not cut them down. For [is] the tree of the field a man, to come from before your presence in a siege?

When besieging a city over a long period of time, a city you intend to possess, you will not destroy the forest which is around it. You will eventually eat from that forest, so do not cut the trees down. Are these trees men that they should fall before you in a siege?

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos	When you beleaguer a city all the seven days to war against it, to subdue it <u>on the Sabbath</u> , you shall not destroy the trees thereof by bringing against them (an instrument of) iron; that you may eat its fruit, cut it not down; for a tree on the face of the field is not as a man to be hidden (put out of sight) before you in the siege. But the tree that you know to be a tree not making fruit to eat, that you may destroy and cut down.
Latin Vulgate	When you have besieged a city a long time, and has compassed it <u>with bulwarks</u> , to take it, you will not cut down the trees that may be eaten of, <u>neither will you spoil the country round about</u> with axes: for it is a tree, and not a man, neither can it increase the number of them that fight against you.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	When you besiege unto a city days many to battle against her to lay hold of her, you will not destroy her tree to cast down upon her an ax, for from him you will eat and them you will not cut down, for the man, a tree of the field to come in from your faces in the siege.
Peshitta (Syriac)	When you shall besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to capture it, you shall not destroy its trees, nor wield an axe against them; because you may eat of them, and you shall not cut them down (for the trees of the field are not like men to flee from before you at the time of the siege).
Septuagint (Greek)	And if you should besiege a city many days to prevail against it by war to take it, you shall not destroy its trees, by applying an iron tool to them, but you shall eat of it, and shall not cut it down. Is the tree that is in the field a man, to enter before you into the work of the siege?
Brenton's Septuagint	And if you should besiege a city many days to prevail against it by war to take it, you will not destroy its trees, by applying an iron tool to them, but you will eat of it, and will not cut it down: Is the tree that is in the field a man, to enter before you into the work of the siege?
Significant differences:	The Latin and the targum have some additional sentences in them. This was a very difficult verse to translate, and there are possible errors in the Hebrew, which would account for that difficulty.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	Now if you have been attacking a city for some time, fighting against it and trying to conquer it, don't destroy its trees by cutting them down with axes. You can eat from those trees; don't cut them down! Do you think a tree of the field is some sort of warrior to be attacked by you in battle?
Contemporary English V.	When you are attacking a town, don't chop down its fruit trees, not even if you have had the town surrounded for a long time. Fruit trees aren't your enemies, and they produce food that you can eat, so don't cut them down.
Easy English	Perhaps you are preparing to take a city. You must not cut down its fruit-trees, but you can eat the fruit. These trees are not your enemies; so do not cut them down.
Easy-to-Read Version	"When you are making war against a city, you might surround that city for a long time. You must not cut down the fruit trees around that city. You may eat the fruit from these trees, but you must not cut them down. These trees are not the enemy, so don't make war against them!
Good News Bible (TEV)	"When you are trying to capture a city, do not cut down its fruit trees, even though the siege lasts a long time. Eat the fruit, but do not destroy the trees; the trees are not your enemies.
<i>The Message</i>	When you mount an attack on a town and the siege goes on a long time, don't start cutting down the trees, swinging your axes against them. Those trees are your future food; don't cut them down. Are trees soldiers who come against you with weapons?

New Berkeley Version	"When you lay siege to a city for many days, making war against it to capture it, you shall not destroy its surrounding fruit trees by cutting them with an axe; you may eat their fruit but you must not cut them down. Are the trees of the field people, defenders of the city, that you should lay siege to them?"
New Century Version	If you surround and attack a city for a long time, trying to capture it, do not destroy its trees with an ax. You can eat the fruit from the trees, but do not cut them down. These trees are not the enemy, so don't make war against them.
New Life Bible	"When you stay around a city a long time, to make war against it and take it, do not destroy its trees with the ax. You may eat from them but do not cut them down. For are trees of the field men that they should be killed?"
New Living Translation	"When you are attacking a town and the war drags on, you must not cut down the trees with your axes. You may eat the fruit, but do not cut down the trees. Are the trees your enemies, that you should attack them? You may only cut down trees that you know are not valuable for food. Use them to make the equipment you need to attack the enemy town until it falls. V. 20 is included for context.
The Voice	When you're fighting against a city, and it hasn't fallen to you even after a long siege, don't chop down all the trees around it. You can eat the fruit <i>and nuts</i> they produce, so don't cut them down. Are these trees humans who are resisting your siege? <i>Of course not!</i>

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	'And whenever you lay siege to a city and you don't succeed in capturing it right away; don't cut down and destroy its [fruit] trees. Rather, [pick the fruit] and eat it. for the trees in the fields aren't men that must be cut down to capture [the city].
Christian Community Bible	If, on attacking a city, you have to lay siege to it for a long time before capturing it, you shall not destroy the fruit trees around it nor cut them with your axe, that you may eat their fruit. Do not cut them, then. Are the trees of the field men that they should also be stricken?
God's Word™	This is what you must do whenever you blockade a city for a long time in order to capture it in war. Don't harm any of its fruit trees with an ax. You can eat the fruit. Never cut those trees down, because the trees of the field are not people you have come to blockade.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	When a city must be taken by force of arms, and thou hast been a long time besieging it, do not lay waste the whole countryside with thy axe, and destroy the trees that yield food. Trees are not men, to increase the number of the city's defenders.
New American Bible (R.E.)	<i>Trees of a Besieged City.</i> When you are at war with a city and have to lay siege to it for a long time before you capture it, you shall not destroy its trees by putting an ax to them. You may eat of them, but you must not cut them down. Are the trees of the field human beings, that they should be included in your siege? 2 Kgs 3:18, 25.
NIRV	Suppose you surround a city and get ready to attack it. And suppose you fight against it for a long time in order to capture it. Then don't chop its trees down and destroy them. You can eat their fruit. So don't cut them down. The trees of the field aren't people. So why should you attack them?
New Simplified Bible	»This is what you must do whenever you blockade a city for a long time in order to capture it in war. Do not harm any of its fruit trees with an ax. You may eat the fruit. Never cut those trees down, because the trees of the field are not people you have come to blockade.
Revised English Bible	When in the course of war you lay siege to a town for a long time in order to take it, do not destroy its trees by taking an axe to them, for they provide you with food; you must not cut them down. The trees of the field are not people, that you should besiege them.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	When you besiege a city many days, fighting toward it to seize it, never destroy its trees by outcasting an adze toward them. Eat from them, but never cut them, for the tree of the field is for the humans coming in front of you for the siege.
Bible in Basic English	If in war a town is shut in by your armies for a long time, do not let its trees be cut down and made waste; for their fruit will be your food; are the trees of the countryside men for you to take up arms against them?
The Expanded Bible	If you surround [besiege] and attack a city for a long time [many days], trying to capture it, do not destroy its trees with an ax. You can eat the fruit from the trees, but do not cut them down. These trees are not the enemy, so don't make war against them [Are these trees of the field human that you should go against them in siege?].
Ferar-Fenton Bible	When you besiege a city for a long period, warring with it to capture it, you shall not destroy the fruit trees by assailing them with the axe, for you can feed from them, therefore you shall not cut them down, for the trees of the field sprang from the ground before you came to the siege.
NET Bible®	If you besiege a city for a long time while attempting to capture it ["to fight against it to capture it."], you must not chop down its trees [Heb "you must not destroy its trees by chopping them with an iron" (i.e., an ax).], for you may eat fruit [Heb "you may eat from them." The direct object is not expressed; the word "fruit" is supplied in the translation for clarity.] from them and should not cut them down. A tree in the field is not human that you should besiege it [Heb "to go before you in siege."!]
New Heart English Bible	When you shall besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to take it, you shall not destroy its trees by wielding an axe against them; for you may eat of them, and you shall not cut them down; for is the tree of the field man, that it should be besieged of you?
NIV, ©2011	When you lay siege to a city for a long time, fighting against it to capture it, do not destroy its trees by putting an ax to them, because you can eat their fruit. Do not cut them down. Are the trees people, that you should besiege them [Or down to use in the siege, for the fruit trees are for the benefit of people.]?

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	"When, in making war against a town in order to capture it, you lay siege to it for a long time, you are not to destroy its trees, cutting them down with an axe. You can eat their fruit, so don't cut them down. After all, are the trees in the field human beings, so that you have to besiege them too?
exeGesés companion Bible	When you besiege a city many days, to fight against it to capture it, ruin not the trees thereof by driving an axe against them: eat of them, but cut them not O humanity, goes the tree of the field at your face to besiege you?
Kaplan Translation	<i>Conducting a Siege</i> When you lay siege to a city and wage war against it a long time to capture it, you must not destroy its trees, wielding an ax against any food producing tree. Do not cut down a tree in the field, unless it is being used by the men who confront you in the siege [(Chizzkuni; Abarbanel). Or, 'Is a tree of the field then a man who will come against you in the siege' (Rashi; Septuagint).].
Orthodox Jewish Bible	When thou shalt besiege a town yamim rabbim, in making war against it to take it, thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof by forcing an axe against them; although

thou mayest eat of them, thou shalt not cut them down. Are the etz hasadeh men that they should come under your siege?

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	When you besiege a city many days to battle against it to grab it, you shall bring ruin on no tree of it by wielding an axe against it; if you may eat of it, you shall not cut them down; for is the tree of the field a human to come before your face in the siege?
Context Group Version	When you shall besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to take it, you shall not destroy the trees by wielding an ax against them; for you may eat of them, and you shall not cut them down; for is the tree of the field man, that it should be besieged of you?
English Standard Version	"When you besiege a city for a long time, making war against it in order to take it, you shall not destroy its trees by wielding an axe against them. You may eat from them, but you shall not cut them down. Are the trees in the field human, that they should be besieged by you?
The updated Geneva Bible	When you will besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to take it, you will not destroy the trees thereof by forcing an axe against them: for you mayest eat of them, and you will not cut them down (for the tree of the field [is] mans [life] [Some read: For man shall be instead of the tree of the field, to come out in the siege against you.]) to employ [them] in the siege.
Green's Literal Translation	When you shall lay siege to a city many days, to fight against it, to capture it, you shall not destroy its trees in order to force an axe against them. For you shall eat of them, and you shall not cut them down; for is the tree of the field a man, that it should be used by you to lay siege?
NASB	"When you besiege a city a long time, to make war against it in order to capture it, you shall not destroy its trees by swinging an axe against them; for you may eat from them, and you shall not cut them down. For is the tree of the field a man, that it should be besieged by you [Lit come before you in the siege] [Read as interrogative with ancient versions]?
New RSV	If you besiege a town for a long time, making war against it in order to take it, you must not destroy its trees by wielding an axe against them. Although you may take food from them, you must not cut them down. Are trees in the field human beings that they should come under siege from you?
Syndein/Thieme	`When in your war against a city you have to besiege it a long time in order to capture it, you must not destroy the trees, wielding the axe against them. You may eat of them, but you must not cut them down. Are trees of the field human to withdraw before you into the besieged city?
Third Millennium Bible	"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 ax against them, for thou mayest eat of them; and thou shalt not cut them down to employ them in the seige, for the tree of the field is man's life.
Webster's updated Bible	When you will besiege a city a long time in making war against it to take it, you will not destroy the trees of it by forcing an ax against them; for you may eat of them: and you will not cut them down (for the tree of the field [is] man's [life]) to employ [them] in the siege:.
Young's Updated LT	"When you lay siege unto a city many days, to fight against it, to capture it, you will not destroy its trees to force an axe against them, for of them you will eat, and them you will not cut down—for man's [is] the tree of the field—to go in at your presence in the siege.

The gist of this verse: When besieging a city the Jews plan to occupy, they are not to destroy the fruit trees around it.

Deuteronomy 20:19a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
tsûwr (צור) [pronounced <i>tsoor</i>]	<i>to bind, to besiege, to confine (shut up, cramp, enclose)</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #6696 BDB #837
Tsûwr has 2 other sets of meanings: <i>to show hostility toward, to be an adversary to, to treat as a foe; and to form, to fashion, to delineate.</i>			
'el (ל) [pronounced <i>eh</i>]	<i>unto; into, among, in; toward, to; against; concerning, regarding; besides, together with; as to</i>	directional preposition (respect or deference may be implied)	Strong's #413 BDB #39
'îyr (עי) [pronounced <i>geer</i>]	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #5892 BDB #746
yâmîym (ימי) [pronounced <i>yaw-MEEM</i>]	<i>days, a set of days; time of life, lifetime; a specific time period, a year</i>	masculine plural noun	Strong's #3117 BDB #398
rab (רב) [pronounced <i>rah^bv</i>]	<i>many, much, great (in the sense of large or significant, not acclaimed)</i>	masculine plural adjective	Strong's #7227 BDB #912
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
lâcham (לחם) [pronounced <i>law-KHAHM</i>]	<i>to engage in battle, to engage in war, to wage war; to fight, to battle</i>	Niphal infinitive construct	Strong's #3898 BDB #535
'al (על) [pronounced <i>gahl</i>]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of relative proximity with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
The phrase <i>to war against her</i> is found back in v. 10.			
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l'</i>]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
tâphas (תפס) [pronounced <i>taw-FAHS</i>]	<i>to lay a hold of, to arrest, to seize; to manipulate, to grasp, to wield, to handle skillfully</i>	Qal infinitive construct with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #8610 BDB #1074

Translation: *When you besiege a city [for] many days, to battle against it, to take possession of it,...* These are directions given to an army with little or no experience—particularly in this realm. Up to this point, Israel has traveled north, and has to defeat several enemies, in order to get to the place where they would cross over the river. So, previously, they were not trying to take cities for their own. However, in the future, they will be not only besieging cities, but they will be taking them for their own. Therefore, there are things which they need to be aware of when taking a city.

Why is this presented as a long siege against a city? Why doesn't Moses just lay down this rule at any point? When a city has been besieged for a long time, and not much headway is being made, the army sometimes becomes desperate, willing to try anything. There is the temptation to apply the scorched earth policy and destroy everything and to take down everything. However, both within the land of promise and without, the Jews were looking to occupy this area. This is going to be their city. Therefore, they should not destroy all of it in order to have a temporal victory.

A fruit tree might take 5–10 years before it begins to bear fruit. The siege of a city might take a month; and it might take 2 or 3 years. The idea is, Moses does not want these citizen-solders to be short-sighted, to pursue a policy which might harm themselves in the long run. They want trees bearing fruit—they want olive and apricot trees and fig trees; they need this sort of harvest for their own food when they take over this geographical area. Even if they spend 2 years defeating this city, they do not want to spend another 5–10 years to get fruit trees to grow and produce on their land.

Deuteronomy 20:19b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
lô' (לא or לול) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
shâchath (שחַת) [pronounced shaw-KHAHTH]	<i>to destroy, to lay waste to, to cause one to go to ruin, to spoil, to ruin; to corrupt [morally], to pervert</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #7843 BDB #1007
'êth (אֶת) [pronounced ayth]	untranslated generally; occasionally <i>to, toward</i>	indicates that the following substantive is a direct object	Strong's #853 BDB #84
'êts (עץ) [pronounced gáys]	<i>tree, wood; wooden post, [wooden] stake, gallows; [collectively for] a forest of trees</i>	masculine singular noun with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #6086 BDB #781
lâmed (ל) [pronounced l ^e]	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
nâdach (נָדַח) [pronounced naw-DAHKH]	<i>to banish, to cast away [aside, down], to compel, to drive away; to thrust [forth, away, aside], to expel; to impel</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #5080 BDB #623
'al (עַל) [pronounced gah]	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of relative proximity with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
gar ^e zen (גַּרְזֵן) [pronounced gahr-ZEHN]	<i>ax, hatchet</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #1631 BDB #173

This word is only found in Deut. 19:5 20:19 1Kings 6:7 Isa. 10:15. It certainly appears to mean ax.

Translation: ...you will not destroy its forest, to bring the ax down upon it. Around any city will be forests and fields of wheat (or corn, or whatever). If the Israelites plan to keep this city and live in it, then they should not cut down the forest which surrounds it.

Deuteronomy 20:19c

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כי) [pronounced kee]	for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
min (מן) [pronounced mihn]	from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, beyond, more than	preposition of separation with the 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
'âkal (אכל) [pronounced aw-KAHL]	to eat; to devour, to consume, to destroy	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #398 BDB #37

Translation: [This is] because you will eat from it [the forest]... They are not to destroy the forest because, at some point in time, they will use the forest for food and for wood products. They need to have a long plan. They cannot go to take a city, and destroy all the land around it.

Deuteronomy 20:19d

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced weh]	and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
'êth (את) [pronounced ayth]	them; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to, toward	sign of the direct object affixed to a 3 rd person masculine plural suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
lô' (לא or לו) [pronounced low]	not, no	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
kâraṯh (כרת) [pronounced kaw-RAHTH]	to cut off, to cut down; to kill, to destroy; to make a covenant	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3772 BDB #503

Translation: ...and [therefore] you will not cut them down. They will need to use these trees, if they plan to take the city as their own. Therefore, the trees should not be taken down.

Clarke approaches this from a humanitarian standpoint: *It is diabolic cruelty to add to the miseries of war the horrors of famine; and this is done where the trees of the field are cut down, the dykes broken to drown the land, the villages burnt, and the crops wilfully spoiled.*⁴¹

⁴¹ Adam Clarke, *Commentary on the Bible*; from e-Sword, Deut. 20:19.

Deuteronomy 20:19e

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kîy (כי) [pronounced <i>kee</i>]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
'âdâm (אָדָם) [pronounced <i>aw-DAWM</i>]	<i>a man, a human being, mankind; transliterated Adam</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #120 & #121 BDB #9
Some claim that the definite article here is actually the interrogative hê instead. ⁴² This would give us the question mark which is found in most translations.			
'êts (עץ) [pronounced <i>gayts</i>]	<i>tree, wood; wooden post, [wooden] stake, gallows; [collectively for] a forest of trees</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6086 BDB #781
sâdeh (שָׂדֵה) [pronounced <i>saw-DEH</i>]	<i>field, land, country, open field, open country; an unpopulated area</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #7704 BDB #961
lâmed (ל) [pronounced <i>l</i> ']	<i>to, for, towards, in regards to, with reference to, as to, with regards to; belonging to; by</i>	directional/relational preposition	No Strong's # BDB #510
bôw' (בו) [pronounced <i>boh</i>]	<i>to come in, to come, to go in, to go, to enter, to advance</i>	Qal infinitive construct	Strong's #935 BDB #97
min (מִן) [pronounced <i>mihn</i>]	<i>from, away from, out from, out of from, off, on account of, since, above, than, so that not, beyond, more than</i>	preposition of separation	Strong's #4480 BDB #577
pânîym (פָּנִים) [pronounced <i>paw-NEEM</i>]	<i>face, faces, countenance; presence</i>	masculine plural noun (plural acts like English singular); with the 2 nd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #6440 BDB #815
Together, min + pânîym mean <i>from before your face, out from before your face, from one's presence</i> . However, together, they can also be a reference to the cause, whether near or remote, and can therefore be rendered <i>because of, because that; by</i> .			
b ^e (ב) [pronounced <i>b^{eh}</i>]	<i>in, into, through; at, by, near, on, upon; with, before, against; by means of; among; within</i>	a preposition of proximity	No Strong's # BDB #88
mâtsôwr (מַצֹּוֹר) [pronounced <i>maw-TSOHR</i>]	<i>distress; siege, besieged; a mound; a bulwark, citadel; entrenchment, rampart; fortification</i>	masculine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #4692 BDB #848

Translation: For [is] the tree of the field a man, to come from before your presence in a siege? This was the most difficult sentence to translate. This was what I came up with, after looking at a few other translations.

⁴² See Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*; from e-Sword; Deut. 20:19–20.

Barnes Notes reads a portion of this verse literally as “For a man is a tree of the field”; interpreting this as a man receives his sustenance by these trees.⁴³ Although Rotherham states: *The difference here is not one of text but of vocalization*,⁴⁴ I think we can be more dogmatic. According to the NASB, this final sentence of this verse is *probably* an interrogative: “For is the tree of the field a man that it should be besieged by you?” However, Keil and Delitzsch not only concur with this viewpoint, but state their case more vehemently, writing, “For is the tree of the field a man, that it should come into siege before you?” *This is evidently the only suitable interpretation of the difficult words...and the one which has been expressed by all the older commentators, though in different ways. But it is one which can only be sustained grammatically.*⁴⁵

Finally, the rendering I have given this verse is one of the most literal, word-for-word which I have found, supplying the question mark, as the Hebrew does not have any such thing as a question mark (or any other sort of punctuation mark).

So you may ask: why would anyone think to destroy the trees in the first place? Two reasons: (1) Out of legalism, they might destroy the tree as a part of everything that breathes. In the zealotry of some to destroy a populace, the legalistic Jewish population might be inclined to raze a land entirely, taking out orchards of fruit trees. Egypt was notorious for razing the land that it conquered.⁴⁶ The complete laying waste of a country seemed to be the order of the day in ancient times, as it is recorded on Assyrian monuments⁴⁷ and found in classical writings.⁴⁸ In recent history, the Jews gave a wonderful greenhouse over to the Palestinians and they **destroyed it completely** because it had belonged to the Jews. (2) They would use the wood for warring implements (to build shelters, battering rams, etc.). Now, for Israel, there were some individual exceptions to this (see 2Kings 3:16–25 Jer. 6:6).

Trees that bore apricots, almonds, olives, etc. were to be left alone in a siege, as these things are basically uncorrupted, even if the surrounding population was exceptionally degenerate. Furthermore, without other fruit trees around, these trees are not just going to pop out of the ground again by themselves. If you remove an entire orchard of fruit trees, it takes more than four or five years to bring them back—unless they bring in fruit trees from elsewhere or have some others nearby, they have destroyed that source of food, making the land that they just conquered less desirable.

God is, therefore, a conservationist, but not an environmentalist. The difference here is in degree. God does not tell us to be concerned about things we cannot change (like the climate). However, God does want us to enjoy our stay on planet earth, and planet earth offers us a great deal to enjoy, by way of color, texture and variety, as well as by way of provision.

God put us in charge of our own environment. It is therefore legitimate to build a house, plant a garden, design and build a walkway, etc. We are making the environment which fits our lives. For the past 10 of more years, I have wanted a library. At some point in my life, that could very well be a reality. For others, they would much prefer a home theater; others would like their backyard to be forested, rather than a lawn. During our time on earth, God would like us to be happy and to enjoy our environment.

The Open Bible: The Israelites were not permitted to follow a “scorched-earth” policy. To render the land incapable of supporting life was wrong. The cities themselves were to be destroyed because

⁴³ Barnes’ Notes, Vol. II, p. 310.

⁴⁴ *The Emphasized Bible*; Rotherham, p. 219).

⁴⁵ Keil & Delitzsch’s *Commentary on the Old Testament*; ©1966 Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.; Vol. I, p. 940. Keil and Delitzsch go into greater detail on this particular verse, pp. 940–941, which I highly recommend as reading to students of the Hebrew language.

⁴⁶ Barnes’ Notes, Vol. II, p. 310.

⁴⁷ Layard, *Nineveh and Babylon*, p. 588; *Monuments*, 1st Ser. Pl. 73; 2 Ser. Pl. 40. This references came by Edersheim, *Bible History Old Testament*, p. 758

⁴⁸ Both Herodotus and Polybius write of such a mode of warfare, as is mentioned by Canon Rawlinson in the *Speaker’s Commentary*.

*Canaanite religion thoroughly corrupted life itself. But the fruit trees had done nothing wrong. Respect for nature because God is the Creator must be balanced with the need to thoroughly cleanse a pagan land.*⁴⁹



When besieging a city over a long period of time, a city you intend to possess, you will not destroy the forest which is around it. You will eventually eat from that forest, so do not cut the trees down. Are these trees men that they should fall before you in a siege? (Deut. 20:19)

Deuteronomy 20:19 (graphic). The photo is from Opusinteractive.com; with the text added. Accessed September 28, 2013.

Here, in this instance, we are speaking of simple common sense. The Jews are going to take this city as their own, so what sense does it make to destroy fruit-bearing trees, which they will take from for many years to come?

Application: In war, it is always easy to take the short-view: we need to defeat this city, and here is a way to do it. If the result is not to your benefit, then that approach is a bad approach. This is not some great moral issue; this is an issue of practicality. “Don’t

destroy all of the fruit-producing trees around a city you intend to possess,” is the advice of Moses. It is simple and sound advice, to allow the soldiers to think in the long term; to allow the soldiers to take the long view on things.

Throughout Moses’ talks with the people of Israel, there are sprinklings of this or that which have nothing to do with being morally right or morally wrong—so why are these things included in Scripture?

Why are there non-moral issues found in the Bible?

1. From time to time, Moses teaches the children of Israel an issue which is not really a moral issue.
2. The example here is, if they are besieging a city, they are not to cut down all of the fruit-producing trees in order to use the wood as a rampart to attack the city.
3. Moses is dispensing practical advice here; he is not laying down moral imperatives.
4. In Deut. 22, the Israelites are told not to mix cotton and wool fibres.
5. The people to whom Moses is speaking have been raised in the desert where God has provided them food and water, and has kept their clothing from falling apart. Their parents have died the sin unto death. Therefore, these are 2 million people who lack common sense (one of the things a parent should try to convey to his or her son).
6. Common sense is often not a matter of great morality, but simply the concept of doing something smarter.
7. In these common sense laws—call them the original Farmer’s Almanac if you will—there was no imputation of a moral factor. Moses never said, “And if you mix these threads, you will be given 10 stripes.” Therefore, we should not confuse a moral law with a common sense recommendation.
8. However, the original question: *why are non-moral issues found in the Bible?*
9. The Bible also reflects actual history, and Moses did advise the generation of promise on their taking of the land of Canaan. This would involve a great many practical issues as well as moral issues.
10. The Bible is not anti-practicality; the book of Proverbs is distinctively a book about practical issues.
11. Some of these non-moral issues are typical. With regards to the mixture of fabric which is incompatible; the Bible is filled with examples of mixtures which are incompatible: the Jews and the heathen Canaanites in the land of promise. The incompatible mixture of clothing is a matter of practicality; but the wall of separation between the Jews and the Canaanites is one of great moral importance. One illustrates the other.

⁴⁹ *The Open Bible*; the New Living Translation; Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, TN; ©1996, p. 264 (footnote).

Why are there non-moral issues found in the Bible?

12. The fact that a little leaven leavens the whole lump (a little yeast will cause a loaf of bread to rise) can also be used to explain how even a little evil can infiltrate a much larger group. When society tolerates or approves of a little evil, that small amount of evil can infiltrate all of society. Paul used this expression in Gal. 5:9 for false teaching and in 1Cor. 5:6 when dealing with arrogance. If Paul, guided by the Holy Spirit, uses a non-moral concept in order to teach a doctrinal concept; then that suggests that many of the non-moral passages can be used in the same manner.
13. So, in other words, some of these non-moral issues can be given a clear parallel spiritual meaning.

When studying Deuteronomy, always bear in mind that Moses is a father figure, and he is teaching this generation of promise not simply issues of morality, but issues of practicality. There is no reason for the Bible to leave these practical issues out.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

In this particular situation, it may seem simple to not destroy the trees in a city that you want to inhabit; but when in war, a person's objectives become very short-term; and Moses is telling the Jews to focus on the long-term goals.

Application: As believers, we face this all of the time. We are in the midst of a business deal, or someone has cheated us, or someone has taken us to court and has cheated us, and we are all up in a tizzy about it. God tells us to take the long view. We are going to face difficult circumstances in our life; we are going to face problems from time to time. You do not spend the rest of the next 3 or 4 years figuring out how to destroy the life of someone who has cheated you in business or has taken money from you in court—even if they are 100% wrong and you are 100% right. You need to take the long view and allow God to work His justice. Now, this does not mean that you do not appeal a court case; it does not mean that you try to lose a court case filed against you. When you are in court, you do what is honest and what is right. If you lose, do not dedicate the next 5 years of your life to harming the person who has harmed you. Consider your options and do not operate on the basis of emotion; and do not take the short-term view.

Application: I was personally terminated from a job where I don't believe that I should have been terminated. I could have taken the time to sue, to take them to court, and to devote the next few years of my life getting "justice" for me. I believed that to be the wrong approach. I took it graciously, working to the last minute to do the best job that I knew how in that job, and then I said my farewells. I may have been hurt and wrongly terminated; but this was not God's plan for me to go after my employer and to change things. Whether I would have prevailed or not, I don't know. But, over the long term, I believe that to have been the correct decision.

Application: So, you take the long-term view of what is happening in your life. Where do you want to put your time? Do you have an unlimited amount of time to devote to this or that? You do not. So, you invest your time wisely. We only have one shot at this life. Every single day in our life is a day that we cannot get back. Do not make that a wasted day in your spiritual life.

Application: We are here on planet earth for a reason. We are not just random batches of molecules flailing about, bouncing into things. We do not allow emotional situations to dictate the use of our time. We simply consider our purpose on this earth (which requires Bible doctrine to know), and we proceed accordingly. Most of the time, this means there are things and problems in our past which could be given a great deal of time to, but do not really require this time. We take the long view. We concentrate, rather, on God's plan; and not on gaining some personal satisfaction resolving a personal conflict.

Application: Is there any actual spiritual benefit to *taking the long view*? Of course there is! We are involved in the **Angelic Conflict**. We cannot see it but we know that it is going on. We are not our own. We have been bought with a price. We are in the midst of this conflict. Therefore, our thoughts, decisions and actions ought to

reflect this reality. What we do in this life extends into eternity. What we know of the plan of God in this life extends far into eternity. So, yes, the believer needs to be able to take the long view.

Only a tree which you know that is not a tree of fruit this one—him you will destroy and you have cut down. And you have built a rampart against the city which she is making with you war as far as her descent.

Deuteronomy
20:20

Only a tree that you know is not a fruit tree—this one, him you [may] destroy and cut down. Then you [may] build a rampart against the city which is making war against you until its descent [into military defeat].

You may, however, use trees that do not produce fruit to cut down and use to make a rampart to use against the city you are at war with until they are defeated.

Here is how others have translated this verse:

Ancient texts:

Targum of Onkelos	But the tree that you know to be a tree not making fruit to eat, that you may destroy and cut down. And you shall raise bulwarks against the city which maketh war with you, until you have subdued it.
Latin Vulgate	But if there be any trees that are not fruitful, <u>but wild, and fit for other uses</u> , cut them down, and make engines, until you take the city, which fights against you.
Masoretic Text (Hebrew)	Only a tree which you know that is not a tree of fruit this one—him you will destroy and you have cut down. And you have built a rampart against the city which she is making with you war as far as her descent.
Peshitta (Syriac)	Only the trees which you know are not trees for food you may destroy and cut down that you may build bulwarks against the city that makes war with you, until it is captured.
Septuagint (Greek)	But the tree which you know to be not fruit-bearing, this you shall destroy and cut down; and you shall construct a mound against the city, which makes war against you, until it is delivered up.
Significant differences:	The Latin has some extra words in it. The very end of this verse is difficult to figure out.

Thought-for-thought translations; paraphrases:

Common English Bible	That said, if you know that a tree is not a food-producing tree, you are allowed to destroy it, cutting it down and using it in the siege against the city that is fighting against you until it falls.
Contemporary English V.	You may need wood to make ladders and towers to help you get over the walls and capture the town. But use only trees that you know are not fruit trees.
Easy English	But you can cut down the other trees to use. You can make things from them that will help you to attack the city. You can do this until the city's people open its gates to you.
Easy-to-Read Version	But you may cut down the trees that you know are not fruit trees. You may use these trees to build weapons for making war against that city. You may use them until the city falls.
Good News Bible (TEV)	You may cut down the other trees and use them in the siege mounds until the city is captured.
<i>The Message</i>	The exception can be those trees which don't produce food; you can chop them down and use the timbers to build siege engines against the town that is resisting you until it falls.

New Berkeley Version	Those trees, however, that you know are not fruit trees you may cut down and use to build siege works against the city that is warring against you, until it falls.
New Life Bible	You may destroy and cut down only the trees you know are not fruit trees. Then you may build walls with the trees to help you fight against the city that makes war with you, until it falls.
The Voice	Only cut down the trees you know don't produce any food. You can use them to build siege machines against the city you're fighting with until it falls.

Partially literal and partially paraphrased translations:

American English Bible	However, you must cut down and destroy any trees that you know aren't fruit bearing. Then you must build a mound against the [walls] of the city that has chosen a war with you, until it is captured.'
Beck's American Translation	Destroy only the trees you know bear fruit you cannot eat, cut them down and use them to build the siege works against the town that is fighting against you, till it falls."
Christian Community Bible	If there are trees in the field which are not fruit-bearing, but are for other uses, cut them down and make ladders and instruments out of them with which you may seize the city that offers you resistance.
God's Word™	You may destroy trees that you know are not fruit trees. You may cut them down and use them in your blockade until you capture the city.
New Advent (Knox) Bible	Spare the fruit-trees, and be content to cut down such wild trees as are fit for other use; and so build engines to reduce the city that defies thee. In verses 19-20 the meaning of the Hebrew text is not quite clear, and it has perhaps suffered from a slight corruption; the sense given to it in the Latin seems the most probable.
New American Bible	However, those trees which you know are not fruit trees you may destroy, cutting them down to build siegeworks with which to reduce the city that is resisting you.
New American Bible (R.E.)	However, those trees which you know are not fruit trees you may destroy. You may cut them down to build siegeworks against the city that is waging war with you, until it falls.
NIRV	But you can cut down trees that you know aren't fruit trees. You can build war machines out of their wood. You can use them until you capture the city you are fighting against.
New Jerusalem Bible	Any trees, however, which you know are not fruit trees, you may destroy and cut down and use to build siege-works against the hostile town until it falls.'
Revised English Bible	But you may destroy or cut down any trees that you know do not yield food, and use them in siege-works against the town that is at war with you, until it falls.
Today's NIV	However, you may cut down trees that you know are not fruit trees and use them to build siege works until the city at war with you falls.

Mostly literal renderings (with some occasional paraphrasing):

Ancient Roots Translinear	Only destroy and cut the tree which you know that it's not a tree for meat, to build siegeworks toward the city that makes war with you, until it descends.
Bible in Basic English	Only those trees which you are certain are not used for food may be cut down and put to destruction: and you are to make walls of attack against the town till it is taken.
The Expanded Bible	But you may cut down trees that you know are not fruit trees and use them to build devices to attack the city walls, until the city is captured.
Ferar-Fenton Bible	However the trees that you know are not trees for food, you may destroy and fell, and build towers with them against the city which is warring with you, until you subdue it.

HCSB	But you may destroy the trees that you know do not produce food. You may cut them down to build siege works against the city that is waging war with you, until it falls.
NET Bible®	However, you may chop down any tree you know is not suitable for food, ³² and you may use it to build siege works [Heb “[an] enclosure.” The term מַצֹּר (matsor) may refer to encircling ditches or to surrounding stagings. See R. de Vaux, <i>Ancient Israel</i> , 238.] against the city that is making war with you until that city falls.

Jewish/Hebrew Names Bibles:

Complete Jewish Bible	However, if you know that certain trees provide no food, you may destroy them and cut them down, in order to build siege-works against the town making war with you, until it falls.
exeGesés companion Bible	Only, the trees you know are not trees for food, ruin and cut them; and build sieges against the city working war with you until it topples.
JPS (Tanakh—1985)	Only trees that you know do not yield food may be destroyed; you may cut them down for constructing siege works against the city that is waging war on you, until it has been reduced.
Judaica Press Complete T.	However, a tree you know is not a food tree, you may destroy and cut down, and you shall build bulwarks against the city that makes war with you, until its submission.
Kaplan Translation	However, if you know that a tree does not produce food, then until you have subjugated [the city], you may destroy [the tree] or cut off [what you need] to build siege machinery against the city waging war with you.
Orthodox Jewish Bible	Only the trees which thou knowest that they be not trees for food, thou shalt destroy and cut them down; and thou shalt build siege works against the town that maketh milchamah with thee, until it be subdued.

Literal, almost word-for-word, renderings:

Concordant Literal Version	But a tree that you know it is not a tree for food, you may bring ruin on it and cut it down, so you may build siege-works against the city which is engaging in battle with you until it comes down.
Context Group Version	Only the trees of which you know that they are not trees for food, you shall destroy and cut them down; and you shall build bulwarks against the city that makes war with you, until it falls.
English Standard Version	Only the trees that you know are not trees for food you may destroy and cut down, that you may build siegeworks against the city that makes war with you, until it falls.
Green’s Literal Translation	Only the tree which you know not to be a fruit tree, you may destroy it, and may cut it down, and may build a bulwark against the city making war with you, until you have subdued it.
New RSV	You may destroy only the trees that you know do not produce food; you may cut them down for use in building siege-works against the town that makes war with you, until it falls.
Syndein/Thieme	Only the trees that you know do not yield food may be destroyed. You may cut them down for constructing siege-works against the city that is waging war on you, until it has been reduced/subdued.
Young’s Updated LT	Only, the tree, which you know that it is not a fruit-tree, it you will destroy, and have cut down, and have built a bulwark against the city which is making with you war till you have subdued it.

The gist of this verse: The Jews were allowed to make use of the trees which do not bear fruit.

Deuteronomy 20:20a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
raq (רָק) [pronounced rahk]	<i>only, provided, altogether, surely; in any case; but; nevertheless</i>	adverb of restrictive force	Strong's #7534 & #7535 BDB #956
'êts (עֵץ) [pronounced éyts]	<i>tree, wood; wooden post, [wooden] stake, gallows; [collectively for] a forest of trees</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #6086 BDB #781
'ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced ash-ER]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
yâda' (יָדָעַ) [pronounced yaw-DAHĠ]	<i>to know, to perceive, to acquire knowledge, to become acquainted with, to know by experience, to have a knowledge of something; to see; to learn; to recognize [admit, acknowledge, confess]</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal imperfect	Strong's #3045 BDB #393
kîy (כִּי) [pronounced kee]	<i>for, that, because; when, at that time, which, what time</i>	explanatory or temporal conjunction; preposition	Strong's #3588 BDB #471
lô' (לֹא or לוֹא) [pronounced low]	<i>not, no</i>	negates the word or action that follows; the absolute negation	Strong's #3808 BDB #518
'êts (עֵץ) [pronounced éyts]	<i>tree, wood; wooden post, [wooden] stake, gallows; [collectively for] a forest of trees</i>	masculine singular construct	Strong's #6086 BDB #781
ma'ăkâl (מַאֲכָל) [pronounced mah-uh-KAWL]	<i>food; fruit; produce corn; corn meal</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #3978 BDB #38
hûw' (הוּא) [pronounced hoo]	<i>he, it; himself as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this (one); same</i>	3 rd person masculine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>to be</i> , is implied	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
'êth (אֵת) [pronounced ayth]	<i>him; untranslated mark of a direct object; occasionally to, toward</i>	sign of the direct object affixed to a 3 rd person masculine singular suffix	Strong's #853 BDB #84
shâchath (שָׁחַת) [pronounced shaw-KHAHTH]	<i>to destroy, to lay waste to, to cause one to go to ruin, to spoil, to ruin; to corrupt [morally], to pervert</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Hiphil imperfect	Strong's #7843 BDB #1007
wê (or vê) (וְ or וּ) [pronounced weh]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251

Deuteronomy 20:20a

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
kâraṯh (כָּרַח) [pronounced kaw- RAHTH]	to cut off, to cut down; to kill, to destroy; to make a covenant	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect; pausal form	Strong's #3772 BDB #503

Translation: Only a tree that you know is not a fruit tree—this one, him you [may] destroy and cut down. Other trees may be cut down; just not those which produce food.

So far, vv. 19–20a read: When besieging a city over a long period of time, a city you intend to possess, you will not destroy the forest which is around it. You will eventually eat from that forest, so do not cut the trees down. Are these trees men that they should fall before you in a siege? You may, however, use trees that do not produce fruit to cut down... There is another kind of tree which can be cut down—a tree that produces bad fruit.

Believe it or not, there is a great deal to be said in the New Testament when it comes to taking an ax to certain fruit trees.

Good and Bad Fruit Trees in the New Testament

Principle/Test	Further Explanation
If the fruit of the tree is bad, it is okay to cut such a tree down. Even now the ax is ready to strike the root of the trees! Therefore every tree that doesn't produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire (Matt. 3:10; HCSB).	What is the idea here? The idea here is, if Israel, a tree which is supposed to produce fruit (divine good) is not producing fruit, then it is okay to ax this tree down. Jesus is explaining why God will destroy nation Israel. So, even without quoting the verse at hand, Jesus takes up this same principle, but gives an exception to this rule, when it is okay to chop down a fruit tree during warfare.
False prophets and the production of fruit (Jesus is speaking): "Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravaging wolves. You'll recognize them by their fruit. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes or figs from thistles? In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but a bad tree produces bad fruit. A good tree can't produce bad fruit; neither can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that doesn't produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So you'll recognize them by their fruit." (Matt. 7:15–20; HCSB)	How does a person recognize a false teacher? How does a person recognize that completely false way of life is being offered up by a false prophet? One way is, you examine their fruits. A good tree will produce good fruit and a bad tree will produce bad fruit. Probably the easiest example of this today is Islam. No matter how much Islam is being packaged and sold, we only need to notice that 5–10 attacks on Christians or Muslims who are insufficiently so or on regular citizens are committed by Muslimterrorists throughout the world on a daily basis.
Matt. 21:19 Seeing a lone fig tree by the road, He went up to it and found nothing on it except leaves. And He said to it, "May no fruit ever come from you again!" At once the fig tree withered. (HCSB)	This is illustrative of Israel. Israel is not producing fruit; and so Jesus curses Israel, and Israel will wither away. The nation Israel, through which God worked for 1500 years (or 2000 years, if we go back to Abraham), will no longer be used of God in this economy.

Good and Bad Fruit Trees in the New Testament

Principle/Test

Further Explanation

Some fruit trees need time and fertilizer before they will produce fruit. Luke 13:6–9 *And He told this parable: "A man had a fig tree that was planted in his vineyard. He came looking for fruit on it and found none. He told the vineyard worker, 'Listen, for three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it even waste the soil?' "But he replied to him, 'Sir, leave it this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it. Perhaps it will bear fruit next year, but if not, you can cut it down.'"*

The analogy is to the believer who has not produced anything yet, even after having been a believer for 3 years. He needs watering and fertilizer in order to grow and to produce fruit. This is a parallel to taking in Bible doctrine in the power of the Spirit.

John 15:1–8 *"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vineyard keeper. Every branch in Me that does not produce fruit He removes, and He prunes every branch that produces fruit so that it will produce more fruit. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in Me, and I in you. Just as a branch is unable to produce fruit by itself unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in Me. "I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in Me and I in him produces much fruit, because you can do nothing without Me. If anyone does not remain in Me, he is thrown aside like a branch and he withers. They gather them, throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you remain in Me and My words remain in you, ask whatever you want and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this: that you produce much fruit and prove to be My disciples."*

This parallel can be applied to Israel and the church; but also to the spiritual production of specific believers. If a person does not use his divine operating assets, then he will produce no divine good. If he abides in Christ (apprehends the divine operation assets which Jesus has provided for us), then he produces fruit.

The cutting off of the branches can refer to either the sin unto death for believers who are not producing divine good; or this can refer to Israel being pruned (cut off) and being replaced by the church in the Church Age.

So even though we are dealing with a non-moral example God the Holy Spirit actually uses principles from this passage in 5 New Testament passages.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

Deuteronomy 20:20b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
w ^e (or v ^e) (ו, or ו) [pronounced <i>weh</i>]	<i>and, even, then; namely; when; since, that; though; as well as</i>	simple wâw conjunction	No Strong's # BDB #251
bânâh (בָּנָה) [pronounced <i>baw-NAWH</i>]	<i>to build, to construct; to erect; to rebuild, to restore</i>	2 nd person masculine singular, Qal perfect	Strong's #1129 BDB #124

Deuteronomy 20:20b

Hebrew/Pronunciation	Common English Meanings	Notes/Morphology	BDB and Strong's Numbers
mâtsôwr (מצור) [pronounced <i>maw-TSOHR</i>]	<i>distress; siege, besieged; a mound; a bulwark, citadel; entrenchment, rampart; fortification</i>	masculine singular noun	Strong's #4692 BDB #848
‘al (עַל) [pronounced <i>gah]</i>	<i>upon, beyond, on, against, above, over, by, beside</i>	preposition of relative proximity	Strong's #5921 BDB #752
‘îyr (עִיר) [pronounced <i>geer]</i>	<i>encampment, city, town</i>	feminine singular noun with the definite article	Strong's #5892 BDB #746
’ăsher (אֲשֶׁר) [pronounced <i>ash-ER</i>]	<i>that, which, when, who, whom</i>	relative pronoun	Strong's #834 BDB #81
hîy’ (הִיא) [pronounced <i>hee]</i>	<i>she, it; also used as a demonstrative pronoun: that, this (one)</i>	3 rd person feminine singular, personal pronoun; sometimes the verb <i>is, is</i> implied	Strong's #1931 BDB #214
‘âsâh (עֹשֶׂה) [pronounced <i>gaw-SAWH]</i>	<i>the one doing, the one making, a constructor, a fashioner, a preparer</i>	feminine singular, Qal active participle	Strong's #6213 BDB #793
‘îm (עִם) [pronounced <i>geem]</i>	<i>with, at, by, near; like; from</i>	preposition of nearness and vicinity with the 2 nd person singular suffix	Strong's #5973 BDB #767
mil ^c châmâh (מִלְחָמָה) [pronounced <i>mil-khaw-MAW]</i>	<i>battle, war, fight, fighting; victory; fortune of war</i>	feminine singular noun	Strong's #4421 BDB #536
This is very similar to the language found back in v. 12.			
‘ad (עַד) [pronounced <i>gahd]</i>	<i>as far as, even to, up to, until; while, so long as; to, even to [some certain limit]; even to [unto], unto</i>	preposition of duration or of limits	Strong's #5704 BDB #723
yârad (יָרַד) [pronounced <i>yaw-RAHD]</i>	<i>to descend, to go down</i>	Qal infinitive construct with the 3 rd person feminine singular suffix	Strong's #3381 BDB #432
A Qal infinitive construct with a preposition can introduce a purpose clause, a result clause or a temporal clause. The preposition ‘ad (עַד) [pronounced <i>gahd]</i> , with an infinitive construct, appears to mean <i>until, till, as far as, even to</i> .			

Translation: Then you [may] build a rampart against the city which is making war against you until its descent [into military defeat]. Non-fruit bearing trees may be used in the attack against the city.

However, the other trees which do not produce anything, they could be used for battle implements. Sometime after Old Testament times, various armies have not followed this rule of allowing the trees to remain and consequently, the land of Palestine has been stripped of many of its trees.⁵⁰

This is simply practical advice, so that when this city is defeated and then occupied by Jews, that they do not look around and wonder, "Where are all those fruit, almond and olive trees? Oh, we cut them all down." This may seem like common sense, but it is difficult to exercise common sense when you are simply looking to be victorious in war.

Application: When you are at war, it is difficult to think beyond victory. However, one must bear in mind that this battlefield where blood is being spilled will also become a place of peace, and considerations must be made beyond the actual battle which is being waged.

Application: Along the same lines, one has to be cognizant of what one does in war and be ever mindful of the media angle, as you may feel completely reasonable when it comes to this or that action, but when exposed to the media, it comes out looking much different. So, the general idea here is, there is more at play here than the battle itself, and these other considerations must play a part in the strategy and tactics.

Chapter Outline		Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines
Forward	Doctrines Covered and Alluded to	Chapters of the Bible Alluded To
Psalms Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter	Other Chapters of the Bible Appropriately Exegeted with this Chapter	Definition of Terms
Introduction	Text	Addendum
www.kukis.org		Exegetical Studies in Deuteronomy

Addendum

We learn a great deal in this chapter, as we do in every chapter of Scripture.

What We Learn from Deuteronomy 20

1. There is no way to play God; we cannot put our a minimal effort, thinking that we can simply fly under the radar.
2. It is not a very smart idea to oppose the nation Israel or to be antisemitic.
3. Many people do not have enough history in their souls to understand what is significant in the events that they observe and what is very transitory.
4. God has given us the ability to appreciate what He has given to us. This is known as capacity for life, and it comes through the intake of Bible doctrine.
5. You cannot have it all; you cannot do it all.
6. God has a unique plan for each and every believer.
7. We see parallels between Israel offering peace to her enemies and God offering peace to us when we are in unbelief.
8. Two of the greatest problems in American thinking today is the idea of no judgment and no consequences.

⁵⁰ *The NIV Study Bible*; ©1995; p. 265.

What We Learn from Deuteronomy 20

9. We learned the greatest mistake of George W. Bush in Iraq and Afghanistan.
10. We looked at slavery from more of a Biblical perspective.
11. We have studied, to a limited degree, the degeneracy of the peoples in the land and how horrendous their child sacrifice was.
12. God is a conservationist; He is not an environmentalist.
13. We learned why there are non-moral issues discussed in Scripture.
14. We learned the difference between taking the short view and the long view in life.
15. Taking the long view in life means, we consider our eternal impact. We learn what is our place in the plan of God and we act accordingly. That has eternal repercussions.
16. Much of the non-moral information found in the Bible is used later to illustrate spiritual concepts.

These concepts are better understood if studied within the context of this chapter.

Chapter Outline

Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines

The ancient historian Josephus seems to take the Old Testament texts at face value and uses them to record the history of this era.

Josephus' History of this Time Period

THE POLITY SETTLED BY MOSES; AND HOW HE DISAPPEARED FROM AMONG MANKIND.

41. Let this be the constitution of your political laws in time of peace, and God will be so merciful as to preserve this excellent settlement free from disturbance: and may that time never come which may innovate any thing, and change it for the contrary. But since it must needs happen that mankind fall into troubles and dangers, either undesignedly or intentionally, come let us make a few constitutions concerning them, that so being apprised beforehand what ought to be done, you may have salutary counsels ready when you want them, and may not then be obliged to go to seek what is to be done, and so be unprovided, and fall into dangerous circumstances. May you be a laborious people, and exercise your souls in virtuous actions, and thereby possess and inherit the land without wars; while neither any foreigners make war upon it, and so afflict you, nor any internal sedition seize upon it, whereby you may do things that are contrary to your fathers, and so lose the laws which they have established. And may you continue in the observation of those laws which God has approved of, and has delivered to you. Let all sort of warlike operations, whether they befall you now in your own time, or hereafter in the times of your posterity, be done out of your own borders: but when you are about to go to war, send ambassadors and heralds to those who are your voluntary enemies, for it is a right thing to make use of words to them before you come to your weapons of war; and assure them thereby, that although you have a numerous army, with horses and weapons, and, above these, a God merciful to you, and ready to assist you, you do however desire them not to compel you to fight against them, nor to take from them what they have, which will indeed be our gain, but what they will have no reason to wish we should take to ourselves. And if they hearken to you, it will be proper for you to keep peace with them; but if they trust in their own strength, as superior to yours, and will not do you justice, lead your army against them, making use of God as your supreme Commander, but ordaining for a lieutenant under him one that is of the greatest courage among you; for these different commanders, besides their being an obstacle to actions that are to be done on the sudden, are a disadvantage to those that make use of them. Lead an army pure, and of chosen men, composed of all such as have extraordinary strength of body and hardiness of soul; but do you send away the timorous part, lest they run away in the time of action, and so afford an advantage to your enemies. Do you also 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, - to continue in their own country; as well as those also who have betrothed, or lately married them wives, lest they have such an affection for these things that they be too sparing of their lives, and, by reserving themselves for these enjoyments, they become voluntary cowards, on account of their wives.

Josephus' History of this Time Period

42. When you have pitched your camp, take care that you do nothing that is cruel. And when you are engaged in a siege; and want timber for the making of warlike engines, do not you render the land naked by cutting down trees that bear fruit, but spare them, as considering that they were made for the benefit of men; and that if they could speak, they would have a just plea against you, because, though they are not occasions of the war, they are unjustly treated, and suffer in it, and would, if they were able, remove themselves into another land. When you have beaten your enemies in battle, slay those that have fought against you; but preserve the others alive, that they may pay you tribute, excepting the nation of the Canaanites; for as to that people, you must entirely destroy them.

From: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/josephus/ant-4.htm> accessed September 24, 2013. Josephus *Antiquities of the Jews*; Book 1, Chapter 8.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

It may be helpful to see this chapter as a contiguous whole:

A Complete Translation of Deuteronomy 20

A Reasonably Literal Translation

A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase

Moses instructs his people about war

When you go forth to war against your enemies and you see horses and chariots—a people greater than you—you will not fear them for Y^ehowah your Elohim [is always] with you—[He is] the One Who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.

When you go out to war against your enemies, and you see their horses and chariots, and you see that they have an army much greater than yours—do not fear them because Jehovah your God is always with you—even in war. He brought you up out of the land of Egypt.

And it is when they draw near to the war that the priest will be brought near [to them] and he will make a proclamation to the people, saying, “Hear, O Israel, you [are all now] drawing near this [lit., *the*] day to war against your enemies. [Let] your hearts not become fearful—you will not fear and you will not retreat and you will not be terrified because of them, for Y^ehowah your Elohim is going with you to fight for you against your enemies to deliver you [from them].”

When they are ready to go to battle, the priest will be brought forward and he will proclaim to the people, “Listen, O Israel, on this day that you are drawing near to go to war against your enemies. Do not allow your hearts to become fearful—do not become fearful or terrified because of them and do not retreat—for Jehovah your God will go with you into this battle against your enemies and He will deliver you from them.”

Those who are exempt from battle

Also an officer will speak to the people, saying, “Who [is] the man who has built a new house but he has not [yet] begun to use it—let him go back and return to his house so that he does not die in battle and another man dedicate his house [lit., *him, it*].

Also, an officer will speak to the army, asking, “Is there anyone here who has built a new house, but has not yet begun to enjoy it? Let that man go back and return to his home so that he does not die in battle without having the chance to enjoy his newly-built home.

And what man [here] has planted a vineyard but not [yet] eaten from it [lit., *profaned it*]? Let him go and return to his house so that he does not die in battle and another man eat from it [lit., *profane it*].

Is there any man here who has recently planted a vineyard, but has not harvest it yet? Let him return to his home so that he does not die in battle and another man enjoy the fruits of his labor.

A Complete Translation of Deuteronomy 20

A Reasonably Literal Translation

A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase

And [is there] a man [here] who is betrothed to a woman, but has not [yet] taken her. Let him go and return to his house, so that he does not die in battle and another man take her.

Is there a man here betrothed to a woman, but has not yet consummated the marriage? Let him return to his house so that he does not die another man take her.

And the officers will add to say to the people, and say, "What man [is] fearful and timid of heart? Let him go and return to his house, so that the heart of his brothers will not melt as his heart."

Finally, the officers will say, "Is there any man here who is fearful and has a timid soul? Let him return to his house so that he does not weaken the resolve of his fellow soldiers."

Strategy and tactics discussed among the officers

When the officers have completed speaking to the people, then they will have personal contact with the commanders of the armies with the head of the people.

When the officers have finished speaking to the people, then they will speak personally to the commanders of the various divisions with the general of the army.

Offering terms of peace to a city the Jews are about to take

When you draw near to a city to fight against it, you will proclaim peace unto them [lit., *her, it*]. And it is, if the city [lit., *she*] answers you "Peace;" and it opens up [its gates] to you, and it will be [that] all the people, those found in it, they are tribute [and labor] for you and they will serve you.

When you come near to a city to war against them, first offer them terms of peace. And if the city replies, "We would like peace with you"; and they open up their gates to you, then all of the people in that city will become tribute and labor to you and they will serve you.

If those of the city do not accept terms of peace, then God gives this city to the Israelites

But if the city [lit., *she*] does not make peace with you, and [instead] has made war with you, you will besiege it and Y^ehowah your Elohim will give it into your hand. You will strike down every male with the mouth of the sword.

However, if the city does not agree to your terms of peace, and they choose to go to war with you instead, then you will besiege it and Jehovah your God will give the city into your hand. You will kill every male in the city with the sword.

Only the women, the children, the livestock and all that is in the city—all of her wealth you will take [as spoil] to yourself. You will devour the wealth of your enemies, which [wealth] Y^ehowah your Elohim has given to you.

As victors in war, you have the rights to all of the wealth of that city, including the women, the children and all the livestock—you may take any and all of this. You may take all the spoil of your enemies, which wealth Jehovah your God has given to you.

Taking a bride from prisoners of war (Deut. 21:10–14)

When you go to war against your enemies and Y^ehowah your Elohim gives them into your hands and you have taken them captive. You [may] see among the captives a beautiful woman with a striking figure, and you have a desire for her and you [want to] take [her] for yourself to wife.

When you go to war against your enemies and Jehovah your God gives them into your hands, and you have then taken your enemy into captivity. It may be that a woman with a beautiful figure among these prisoners captures your attention and you have a great desire to take her as your wife.

A Complete Translation of Deuteronomy 20

A Reasonably Literal Translation	A Reasonably Literal Paraphrase
Then you will bring her into the midst of your home and she will shave her head, fashion her nails, and remove her captivity clothing from upon her. She will remain in your home and she will weep for [both] her father and her mother for a full month.	You will bring this woman into your home and she will shave her head, cut back her nails, and remove the captivity clothing that she was wearing. She will remain in your home for a full month while she mourns for her mother and father.
Afterwards, you will go in unto her and you have [therefore] married her and she has become your wife.	After this, you will go in unto her and have, by this, married her and she has become your wife.
But if it is [that] you have not taken pleasure in her, then you will send her away wherever she wishes [lit., <i>according to her soul</i>]. You will definitely not sell her on account of silver—you will not treat her as a slave because you have humbled her.	If, on the other hand, you do not delight in her, then you will send her away as she wishes. You will, under no circumstances, sell her as a slave for money—you may not treat her as a slave because you have humbled her.
These laws do not apply to the heathen in the land of Canaan	
So you will do to all the cities greatly distant from you, which [are] not the cities of these nations [near] here. Only from the cities of these people whom Y ^e howah your Elohim is giving you [as] an inheritance—[of them], you will not keep alive any living thing. At that time, you will utterly destroy them [by devoting them to a godly destruction]: the Hittite and the Amorite, the Canaanite and the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite—as Y ^e howah your Elohim has commanded you. [This is] to the end that, they will not [be able to] teach you to do all their disgusting acts which they have done for their gods. [By letting any of them live] you will have sinned before Y ^e howah your Elohim.	This is what you will do with all the cities which are far from here; this is not what you will do with the cities that are near to you. You will not keep anyone alive from the cities that Jehovah your God has given to you as your inheritance. When you enter into the land to take it, you will completely destroy all of them—the Hittites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites—just as Jehovah your God has commanded you to do. This is so that they will not be able to teach you to do the disgusting things which they do before their gods. In fact, if you let them live, then you will have sinned before Jehovah your God.
Preservation of the fruit trees when besieging a city	
When you besiege a city [for] many days, to battle against it, to take possession of it, you will not destroy its forest, to bring the ax down upon it. [This is] because you will eat from it [the forest] and [therefore] you will not cut them down. For [is] the tree of the field a man, to come from before your presence in a siege? Only a tree that you know is not a fruit tree—this one, him you [may] destroy and cut down. Then you [may] build a rampart against the city which is making war against you until its descent [into military defeat].	When besieging a city over a long period of time, a city you intend to possess, you will not destroy the forest which is around it. You will eventually eat from that forest, so do not cut the trees down. Are these trees men that they should fall before you in a siege? You may, however, use trees that do not produce fruit to cut down and use to make a rampart to use against the city you are at war with until they are defeated.

[Chapter Outline](#)

[Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines](#)

The following Psalms would be appropriately studied at this time: Psalm 18 30 (the dedication of David's home) 83 144.

Chapter Outline	Charts, Maps and Short Doctrines	
Forward	Doctrines Covered and Alluded to	Chapters of the Bible Alluded To
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