

Gleanings from the Pentateuch

“Holy War” (pt 1) Deuteronomy 7:1-26

“Holy War”

A. Definition

- “Conflict undertaken by the Lord, usually through the agency of His people, to achieve His redeeming, purifying, kingdom purposes”
- “*herem*” – a person or thing devoted to the Lord and placed under a ban for utter destruction
- holy war is unique and distinguishable from other kinds of war (see Deut. 20)

“Holy War”

Deuteronomy 20:16-18

“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 utterly destroy them (*herem*)...in order 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.”

“Holy War”

B. Purposes

1. The judgment of God’s enemies and their removal from His land
2. The protection of God’s people from the corruption of idolatry
3. The eradication of all idolatry and detestable practices from the land
4. The exaltation of Yahweh as God alone in the sight of the nations and Israel

“Holy War”

C. Perspective

1. God’s absolute holiness
 - All deserve judgment – none are righteous!
 - God judges justly and without exception

“Holy War”

C. Perspective

2. God’s unexpected mercy
 - His forbearance toward idolatrous peoples
 - His inexplicable, redeeming love toward His chosen people