

Dr. Tremper Longman, God is a Warrior, Session 2, How Warfare Conducted, Before, During, After Battle Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Study Guide, 4) Briefing Document, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Longman, God is a Warrior, Session 2, How Warfare Conducted, Before, During, After Battle, Biblicalearning.org, BeL

Dr. Tremper Longman's lecture discusses Old Testament warfare, analyzing its conduct before, during, and after battles. He examines relevant passages from Deuteronomy, focusing on laws concerning warfare and the importance of divine guidance. **Longman highlights the spiritual preparation** required, including sacrifices, circumcision, and maintaining ritual purity. **He emphasizes God's role as the ultimate warrior**, illustrating how victory depended on faith in God rather than military strength. Finally, he **explains post-battle celebrations** and the concept of *herem*, the complete destruction of enemy cities.

2. 17 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Longman, God is a Warrior, Session 2 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Theology → God is a Warrior).



**Longman_Warrior_
Session02.mp3**

3. Briefing Document

Briefing Doc: Warfare in the Old Testament - Dr. Tremper Longman

This briefing document summarizes the main themes and key ideas from Dr. Tremper Longman's lecture "God is a Warrior, Session 2, How Warfare is Conducted: Before, During and After a Battle". The document draws upon the provided transcript and highlights the religious nature of warfare in ancient Israel, exploring the spiritual preparation, divine involvement, and specific examples from biblical texts.

Main Themes

- **God as a Warrior:** The lecture emphasizes the concept of Yahweh as a divine warrior who fights on behalf of Israel. This is illustrated through examples like the battle of Jericho, where God appears as a warrior figure to Joshua (Joshua 5:13-15), and David's confrontation with Goliath, where David declares "the battle is the Lord's" (1 Samuel 17:47).
- **Religious Nature of Warfare:** Warfare in ancient Israel was deeply intertwined with religious beliefs and practices. Before engaging in battle, the Israelites sought divine guidance, spiritual preparation, and offered sacrifices. The presence of the Ark of the Covenant on the battlefield symbolized God's presence and the need for ritual purity among soldiers.
- **Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility:** While God is the ultimate determiner of victory, humans still have a role to play. Dr. Longman uses the analogy of wisdom (Proverbs) and salvation (Philippians 2) to illustrate this interplay. He emphasizes that both divine guidance and human action are necessary for success.
- **Celebration and Psalms:** Victory in battle was celebrated through hymns and songs of praise, reflecting the belief that God had granted them victory. Dr. Longman highlights the connection between Psalms and warfare, arguing that many Psalms were composed for specific battle contexts and reflect the Israelites' trust and reliance on Yahweh as their warrior-king.

Key Ideas and Facts

- **Inquiring of the Lord:** Before engaging in battle, Israelite leaders were required to seek God's will. This was done through direct revelation (e.g., Joshua encountering the divine warrior), or through priestly consultation using tools like the Urim and Thummim (1 Samuel 23).

- **Spiritual Preparation:** The army was required to be spiritually pure before engaging in battle, akin to entering a sacred space. Examples include the mass circumcision before the battle of Jericho and Uriah's refusal to sleep with his wife while the Ark was on the battlefield (2 Samuel 11).
- **Sacrifices:** Offering sacrifices before battle was a crucial aspect of preparation, demonstrating their reliance on God's favor. Saul's unauthorized offering of sacrifices (1 Samuel 13) is cited as an example of disregarding proper religious protocol and demonstrating a lack of faith.
- **Irrelevance of Troop Size:** Dr. Longman emphasizes that the size and strength of the Israelite army were inconsequential compared to God's power. The story of Gideon (Judges 6-8) illustrates this point, where God instructs Gideon to reduce his army to a mere 300 men to ensure victory is attributed solely to divine intervention.
- **The Herem:** Deuteronomy 20 prescribes the complete destruction of certain enemy cities within Canaan, including their inhabitants and possessions. This practice, known as the herem, is highlighted as a controversial aspect of warfare in the Old Testament, raising ethical questions that Dr. Longman plans to address later.

Significant Quotes

- **"The number of troops and the quality of their weapons don't matter. Why? Because God is the warrior."**
- **"The battle is the Lord's."**
- **"[T]his is the first time Yahweh is explicitly called a warrior."**
- **"Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things. His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him." (Psalm 98:1)**

Conclusion

Dr. Longman's lecture provides a detailed overview of the religious dimensions of warfare in ancient Israel. The lecture highlights the deep-seated belief that Yahweh was a warrior-god who fought on behalf of his people. By exploring the spiritual preparations, divine interventions, and celebratory hymns associated with warfare, Dr. Longman illuminates the complex relationship between faith, military action, and divine sovereignty in the Old Testament.

4. God is a Warrior, Session 2, Warfare Conducted, Before, During, After Battle

Warfare in the Old Testament: A Study Guide

Short Answer Questions (2-3 sentences each)

1. Explain the significance of the laws of warfare found in Deuteronomy 7 and 20.
2. How did the Israelites determine God's will regarding engaging in battle? Provide two examples.
3. What is the connection between spiritual preparation for battle and the concept of God's presence on the battlefield?
4. Why was the size and strength of the Israelite army considered inconsequential in battle? Use an example from the text.
5. Explain the theological significance of the David and Goliath story in relation to warfare in the Old Testament.
6. Describe two ways in which the book of Numbers depicts the wilderness wanderings as a march into battle.
7. What was the purpose and significance of celebratory hymns sung after a successful battle? Provide an example.
8. How do the Psalms reflect the concept of warfare in the Old Testament? Give examples of Psalms sung before, during, and after battle.
9. Explain the concept of the "new song" as it relates to God's warring activity.
10. What is the "herem" and how was it applied in warfare?

Answer Key

1. The laws in Deuteronomy 7 and 20 provide specific guidelines for conducting war, emphasizing the importance of seeking God's will and avoiding treaties and intermarriage with defeated nations. They illustrate the application of the commandment "You shall not murder" within the context of warfare.
2. The Israelites sought God's will through direct communication with God, as seen in Joshua's encounter with the commander of the Lord's army, and through priestly inquiry using the Urim and Thummim, as demonstrated by David.

3. Spiritual preparation was crucial because God was believed to be present on the battlefield, often symbolized by the Ark of the Covenant. Just as purity was required to enter the sanctuary, spiritual readiness was necessary to engage in battle alongside God.
4. The Israelites believed that victory ultimately depended on God, not on human strength or military might. Gideon's downsized army of 300 men, chosen by God, exemplifies this belief, highlighting that God, not human numbers, secures victory.
5. The David and Goliath narrative emphasizes that God, not human power, determines victory in battle. David's reliance on God's name and his rejection of Saul's armor underscore the message that the "battle is the Lord's," further solidifying the theological significance of God as the true warrior.
6. Numbers presents a military registration, counting men eligible for army service, and portrays the Israelite camp arrangement with the Tabernacle at the center, mirroring ancient Near Eastern war camps with the general's tent at the heart. Both elements reinforce the depiction of the wilderness wanderings as a divinely led military campaign.
7. Celebratory hymns, such as the Song of Moses in Exodus 15 and the Song of Deborah in Judges 5, served to praise and glorify God for granting victory in battle. These hymns acknowledged God's power and sovereignty, reinforcing the understanding that victory was a gift from God.
8. The Psalms express the reality of warfare in the lives of the Israelites, including pleas for God's intervention, expressions of confidence in God's protection, and triumphant declarations of God's victory. Psalm 7 represents a lament sung before battle, Psalm 91 a psalm of confidence during battle, and Psalm 24 a celebratory hymn after victory.
9. The "new song" signifies a song of victory and renewal, celebrating God's act of establishing order and justice through his warring activity. It is not a novel composition but rather a song praising God's consistent and powerful actions that bring about a transformed reality.

10. The "herem" refers to the complete destruction of a conquered city and its inhabitants, offering everything to God. This practice, mandated for certain Canaanite nations, involved the destruction of idols and the execution of people, a controversial concept raising ethical questions about the extent of divine judgment.

Essay Questions

1. Analyze the ways in which God's character as a warrior is revealed in the Old Testament accounts of warfare. Consider specific examples and explore the implications of this portrayal for understanding God's relationship with Israel.
2. Compare and contrast the approaches to warfare taken by Saul and David. How do their actions and motivations reflect their understanding of God's role in battle?
3. Explore the role of the Ark of the Covenant in Israelite warfare. How does its presence on the battlefield symbolize God's involvement and influence the Israelites' understanding of their role in battle?
4. Discuss the significance of the "herem" in Old Testament warfare. Analyze the theological rationale behind this practice and its potential implications for interpreting the ethical dimensions of warfare.
5. Drawing on the Psalms and other relevant texts, analyze how the concept of "spiritual warfare" emerges from the Old Testament understanding of physical warfare. How do these ancient concepts inform and influence our understanding of spiritual struggle and victory in the Christian life?

Glossary of Key Terms

Ark of the Covenant: A sacred chest containing the tablets of the Ten Commandments, symbolizing God's presence and covenant with Israel. It played a central role in Israelite warfare, often accompanying the army into battle.

Herem (utter destruction): A command from God to completely destroy a conquered city, its inhabitants, and all its possessions, offering everything to God. It was applied selectively, primarily to certain Canaanite nations, and its practice raises ethical questions.

Urim and Thummim: Sacred objects used by the high priest to determine God's will in specific situations, including whether to engage in battle. Their exact nature and function remain unclear, but they served as a means of seeking divine guidance.

Divine Sovereignty: The belief that God is the ultimate ruler and controller of all things, including the outcome of battles. This concept underscores the dependence of the Israelites on God's power for victory.

Spiritual Preparation: The process of readying oneself for battle through acts of ritual purity, prayer, and seeking God's favor. This preparation highlighted the sacred nature of warfare and the need to be in right relationship with God before engaging in battle.

Celebratory Hymns: Songs of praise and thanksgiving offered to God after a victorious battle. These hymns, such as the Song of Moses and the Song of Deborah, acknowledged God's power and celebrated his deliverance.

Psalms of Warfare: Psalms that reflect the reality of warfare in the lives of the Israelites, expressing pleas for God's intervention, confidence in his protection, or celebration of his victory. They provide insights into the spiritual and emotional dimensions of warfare in ancient Israel.

New Song: A song of victory and renewal, celebrating God's act of establishing order and justice through his warring activity. It signifies a transformed reality brought about by God's powerful actions.

Spiritual Warfare: The concept of a battle being fought on a spiritual level, often drawing on the imagery and language of physical warfare. This concept, rooted in the Old Testament understanding of God's battles against evil, informs our understanding of struggle and victory in the Christian life.

5. FAQs on Longman, God is a Warrior, Session 2, Warfare Conducted, Before, During, After Battle, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ: God as a Warrior in the Old Testament

1. How did the Israelites determine if they should go to war?

The Israelites believed that war was only permissible if it was God's will. They sought divine guidance through various means, including:

- **Direct communication:** God might appear to a leader, such as Joshua, and give explicit instructions regarding warfare.
- **Priestly inquiry:** The high priest would consult God using the Urim and Thummim, sacred objects that provided divine responses.
- **Prophets:** God might communicate His will through prophets, who would relay the message to the leaders and the people.

It was crucial for the Israelites to understand that they were not autonomous in matters of war; they were instruments of God's will.

2. What kind of spiritual preparation did the Israelites undertake before a battle?

The Israelites believed that they needed to be spiritually pure to engage in warfare alongside God. This involved:

- **Circumcision:** Ensuring all the men were circumcised, signifying their covenant with God and readiness for holy acts.
- **Passover:** Celebrating the Passover feast, commemorating God's deliverance and reaffirming their reliance on His protection.
- **Ritual Purity:** Observing the laws of ritual purity, such as avoiding contact with anything that would make them temporarily unclean.

This spiritual preparation emphasized the sacred nature of warfare for the Israelites; they were not merely fighting for land or power, but for God.

3. Did the size and strength of the Israelite army matter in battle?

The Israelites believed that victory ultimately depended on God, not on human strength or military might.

- **God as the Decisive Factor:** The Bible emphasizes that God was the true warrior, fighting on behalf of His people. The size and strength of the Israelite army were secondary.
- **Examples of Small Victories:** Stories like Gideon's victory with 300 men and David's defeat of Goliath highlight the principle that God could grant victory even with seemingly inadequate forces.
- **Avoiding Pride:** God sometimes limited the size of the Israelite army to prevent them from attributing victory to their own strength and to ensure they recognized His hand in their success.

This belief fostered humility and dependence on God, recognizing that their role was to be obedient and faithful, while trusting God to deliver them.

4. What role did the Ark of the Covenant play in warfare?

The Ark of the Covenant was a physical representation of God's presence among the Israelites.

- **Symbol of Divine Presence:** Its presence on the battlefield signified that God was with His people, fighting alongside them.
- **Source of Confidence and Strength:** Seeing the Ark instilled courage and confidence in the Israelite soldiers, reminding them that they were not alone.
- **Object of Reverence:** The Ark was treated with utmost respect and care, highlighting its sacred significance and the seriousness with which they approached warfare.

The Ark served as a visual reminder of God's covenant with Israel and His promise to protect and fight for them.

5. How did the Israelites celebrate their victories?

Victories were celebrated with great joy and thanksgiving, recognizing God as the source of their success.

- **Songs of Praise:** They would sing hymns and songs of praise, extolling God's power and might, such as the Song of Moses after the Red Sea crossing and the Song of Deborah after defeating the Canaanites.
- **Psalms of Thanksgiving:** Many Psalms express gratitude and praise for God's deliverance in battle, reflecting the centrality of warfare in their lives and their deep reliance on God.
- **Offerings and Sacrifices:** They would offer sacrifices to God, acknowledging His role in their victory and expressing their gratitude for His protection and provision.

These celebrations were not mere revelry, but acts of worship, recognizing God's faithfulness and renewing their commitment to Him.

6. What is the concept of *herem* in relation to warfare?

Herem is a Hebrew term that signifies complete destruction and devotion to God.

- **Total Destruction of Enemies:** In some cases, God commanded the Israelites to completely destroy their enemies, including people, livestock, and possessions. This was a practice intended to prevent idolatry and the assimilation of pagan practices.
- **Controversial Practice:** The *herem* is a difficult concept for modern readers to understand and accept, raising ethical questions about the justification for such complete destruction.
- **Devotion to God:** It is important to remember that *herem* was not about gratuitous violence but about purifying the land and maintaining fidelity to God. Everything destroyed was considered "devoted" to God.

The *herem* underscores the absolute sovereignty of God and the seriousness of idolatry in the eyes of the Israelites.

7. How do the Psalms reflect the theme of God as a warrior?

Many Psalms contain imagery and language associated with warfare, reflecting the reality of their lives and their understanding of God.

- **Laments for Protection:** Some Psalms are prayers for deliverance from enemies, expressing fear and desperation, and calling on God as their protector and warrior.

- **Psalms of Confidence:** Other Psalms express unwavering trust in God's power and victory, assuring the reader of God's presence and protection even amidst danger.
- **Victory Hymns:** Psalms also celebrate God's triumphs in battle, praising His strength, justice, and faithfulness.

The Psalms demonstrate the Israelites' deep faith in God as their warrior and their reliance on Him for protection and deliverance in times of war.

8. How does the concept of God as a warrior relate to the New Testament?

While the New Testament doesn't emphasize physical warfare in the same way, the concept of God as a warrior is still present, though often with a spiritual application.

- **Spiritual Warfare:** The New Testament speaks of spiritual warfare against sin, temptation, and the forces of darkness. Christians are called to put on the armor of God and fight against these spiritual enemies.
- **Jesus as Victor:** Jesus is portrayed as the ultimate victor, conquering sin and death through His death and resurrection. He is the triumphant warrior king who leads His people to victory.
- **Ultimate Peace:** The New Testament vision points to a future where all war and violence will cease, and God's reign of peace and justice will be fully established.

The concept of God as a warrior in the New Testament is transformed, focusing on a spiritual battle that all Christians are called to fight, with Jesus as their victorious leader.