

DEUTERONOMY 19: HOLY WAR



- *“When the Lord your God has cut off the nations....”*
- Battle for Canaan was the Lord’s war
- Since a HOLY God is ordering it, by definition it is a HOLY war
- God specifies certain rules concerning holy warfare



WHAT IS HOLY WAR?

- Crusades and Islamic Jihad are NOT “holy war”
- Biblical Holy War is a war waged on God’s behalf
- Biblical Holy War is not an attempt to spread religion
- Revolutionary War, WWII, Viet Nam are NOT Holy Wars

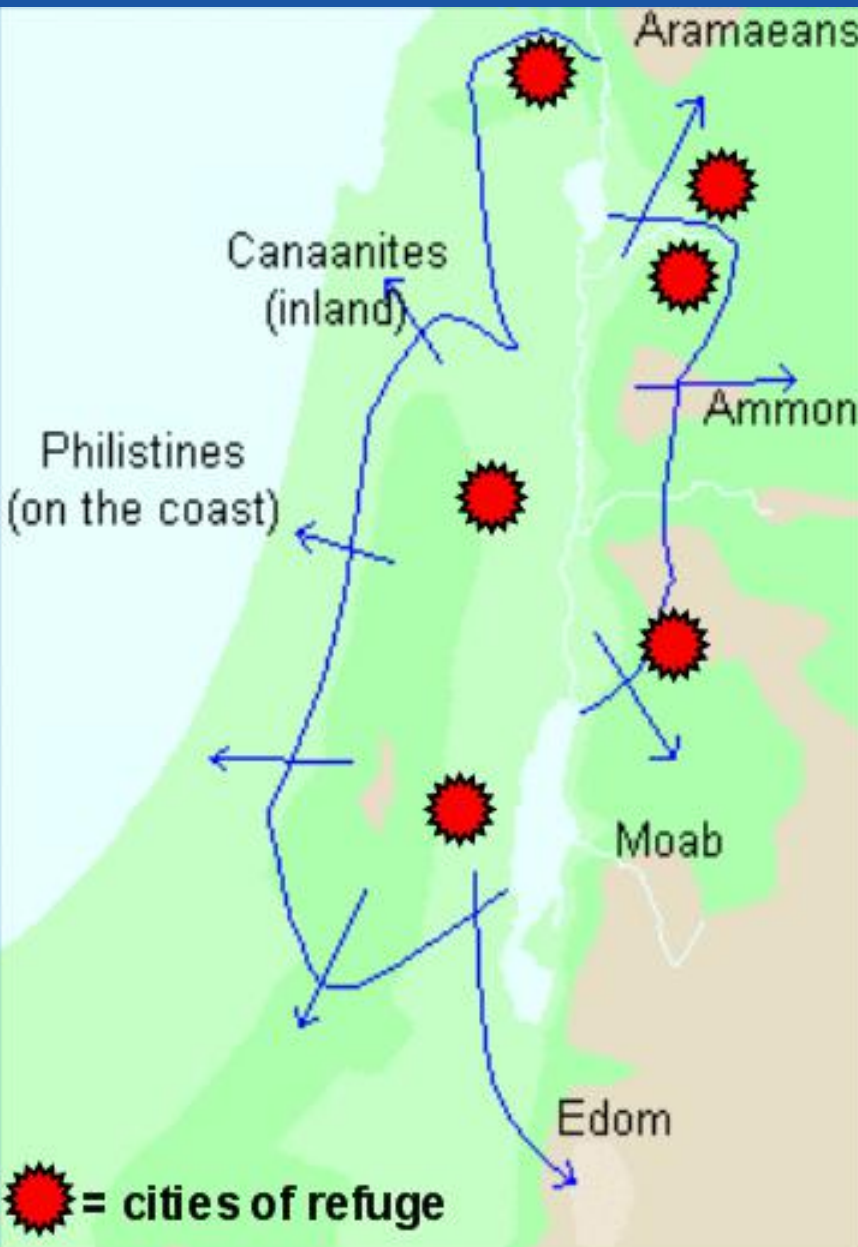


ONLY TWO TRUE HOLY WARS

- 1) Battle for Canaan
- 2) Battle of Armageddon
- Israel and Canaan were not historical antagonists up to this point
- God DECLARED the Canaanite nations to be His enemies
- Israel did not have a hatred towards Canaan nor Canaan a hatred towards Israel



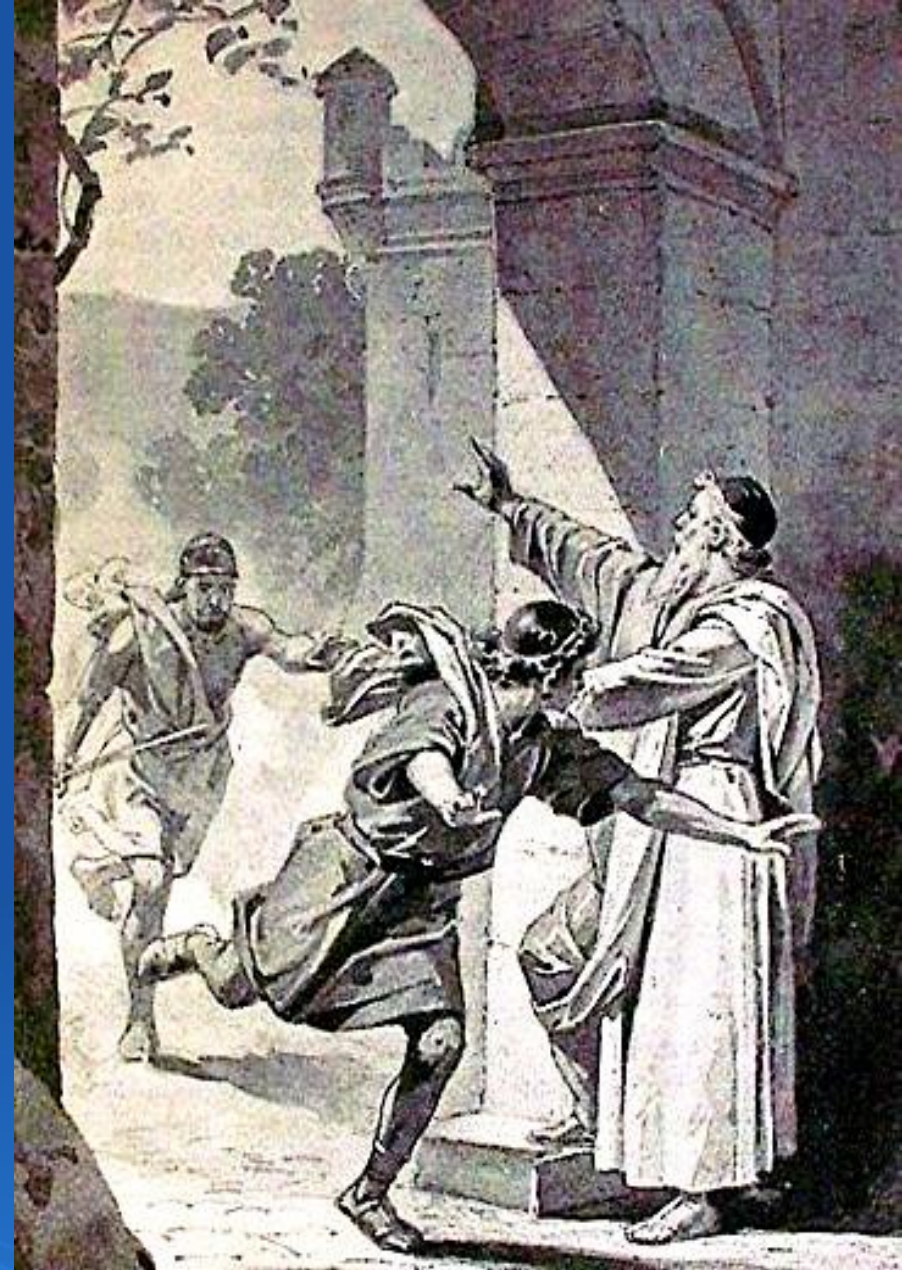
CITIES OF REFUGE



- 3 sanctuary cities on East bank of Jordan River
- 3 sanctuary cities of West bank of Jordan River
- Transjordan = East bank
- Each city to be centrally located
- These are some of the 48 Levitical cities
- Designed to be “safe zones”
- Killer could flee to these cities and be protected

THE BLOOD AVENGER

- *Go'el HaDam* = Blood avenger
- Middle Eastern custom that the killer must be hunted down and killed by the victim's relatives
- If *Go'el HaDam* caught up with the killer before he got to a city of refuge, it was legal for him to kill the man
- City of Refuge ONLY protected a man guilty of ACCIDENTAL killing



PREMEDITATED MURDER

- Murder = intentional and unjust killing
- Killer has NO right to safe haven
- Elders of killer's city turn him over to the *Go'el*
- PRINCIPLES:
- 1) Intentional sins are not covered by the sacrificial system
- 2) Sin NOT covered by sacrificial system requires the life of the criminal

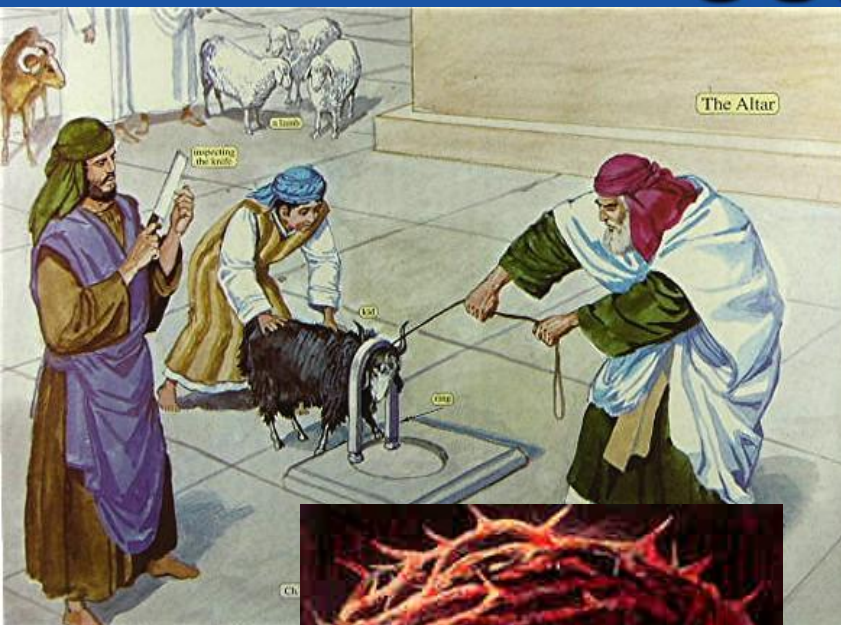


BIBLICAL RULES ON BLOOD

- Only INNOCENT blood can atone for sin
- The blood of the GUILTY party is required as a reparation to God for sin
- The blood of the INNOCENT can (by substitution) atone for the blood of the guilty BUT.....only for sins that CAN be atoned for!!
- The Blood Avenger was NOT doing anything wrong



WHY CHRIST'S SACRIFICE IS SUPERIOR



- Messiah Yeshua's sacrifice CAN atone for intentional sins
- HOWEVER.....confession and repentance are also required
- Worked the same way for OT animal sacrifices
- **Hebrews 10:26** ***“If we deliberately keep on sinning.....no sacrifice for sins....only judgment....”***
- God is the ultimate Blood Avenger
- **NO** pity for the condemned

BOUNDARY MARKERS AND WITNESSES

- Boundary stones marked the boundary lines of real property
- Moving the stones illegally took land from a neighbor
- Keeping land in the family and tribe was key in God's laws
- Vs. 15 starts "fail-safe" system to avoid wrongful convictions
- Minimum of 2 witnesses required to convict
- **WITNESSES:**
- 1) brought charges
- 2) testified
- 3) prime executioners



FALSE WITNESSES

- False witness knowingly makes false charges or gives false testimony
- If a person is found to be a false witness they must bear the punishment for the crime for which they falsely accused!!
- The false witness could be EXECUTED in a capital case
- God says this harsh consequence will rid the community of this evil

LEX TALIONIS

- *Lex Talionis* = principle of “an eye for an eye”
- Here in Deut. 19 this applies to the false witness
- This was NOT to be taken literally, it is an idiom
- It indicates proportionality for punishment vs. the crime
- This was ONLY to be applied to civil and criminal cases
- NOT to be applied to inter-personal relationships!!



DEUTERONOMY 20: INSTRUCTIONS FOR HOLY WAR



- Israel did NOT have chariots, but Canaanite nations did
- Lord deals FIRST with the mental side of war: FEAR
- Israel told to remember Egypt
- God says He will be leading them, so they have nothing to fear

PRIESTS ADDRESS THE TROOPS

- Priests at the center of all that will happen
- Priests blow trumpets during battle
- ***Shema*** = Hear, O Israel
- 1) don't let heart be faint
- 2) don't be afraid of battle
- 3) don't panic
- 4) don't be in dread of the Canaanites
- The LORD will lead them to victory!



3 DEFERRMENTS FOR YOUNG MEN



- Young men can choose not to fight under certain circumstances
- “OFFICIALS” speak to the soldiers
- Officials are civilians (perhaps Levites)
- Deferral #1: Home not yet dedicated
- Probably means young man has not yet started a family (not engaged)

DEFERAL #2: HASN'T "EATEN" OF HIS VINEYARD

- The Holy War is going to continue for an extended period of time
- Word usually translated as "harvested" or "eaten" is *hillelo*
- *Hillelo* = De-sacralize
- Sacralize = make holy
- De-sacralize = make common
- Law of Leviticus 19:23
- Fruit of new vineyard "forbidden" for first 3 years
- In 4th year ALL the fruit belongs to God (it is HOLY)
- In 5th year fruit can be eaten (it is now common)



DEFERRAL #3: ENGAGED BUT NOT MARRIED



- If man died he would lose the “bride price” he has paid and another man would gain
- Without children the man’s “life essence” would continue and his line would be cut-off
- A man simply too frightened to fight was also exempted because it was bad for morale