

Battleground by Paul Gasser, Elder, Etz Chayim-Tree of Life Congregation, Las Cruces, NM.

Now these are the nations that the LORD left, to test Israel by them, that is, all in Israel who had not experienced all the wars in Canaan. ²It was only in order that the generations of the people of Israel might know war, to teach war to those who had not known it before. (Jud. 3:1-2 ESV)

I find these two Scriptures very appropriate for our lives today, not just a good history lesson. Why? As Children of God, we need to learn war. I know that is not a popular teaching right now. Yet do you know that every day we are at war? War against the evil one, war against those whom come against your good name, and even more so, war within your own flesh. The internal war which we fight is a constant, never ending battle until we are with the LORD.

We fight doubt, insecurities, fear and judgment against ourselves all the time. Sometimes we need to fight against arrogance, talking badly about others and using people. Frequently, we have people violating Torah in some way and thus we need to address the situation and this is indeed a battle. The problem with the last part is some people do not think they are doing anything wrong in those areas. Other times we must fight against what the world wants from us or wants us to do. The internal fight comes from making the decision beforehand so when we must make it, we are able to. If we wait until that moment comes to make the decision, most of the time we fail.

Is it not interesting that God purposely left those nations in the Land just so the children of Israel could learn about war and know war? God wants us to know about war and warfare. Do not doubt that. Even King David said the same thing: **Blessed be the LORD, my rock, who trains my hands for war, and my fingers for battle.** (Ps. 144:1 ESV) King David also said the same thing in Psalm 18:34. What about what Yeshua says: **Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.** (Mt. 5:9 ESV) Peace makers are much different than peace keepers...war is common for peace makers. How about the adversary before Yeshua comes back? **Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them.** (Rev. 13:7a ESV) Are you ready for war? Do you know how to fight in a war? Have you seen war? Most of God's children right now are not ready for war. It is all about love, grace and "can't we all just get along".

God has put me through a great training cycle for His warfare. It cost me everything to learn how to battle. The battles have not yet stopped, nor will they. Each battle increases my wisdom and strength in the Word of God. God has purposely allowed certain people (i.e. nations) to remain in my life for such training. But now, I am learning about the subtlety in warfare. Where are you at in learning how to battle? Can you battle yet? Or do you just remain silent, or worse yet, fall into gossip and slander towards those whom know how to wage war against the evil one? God is trying to teach His children for war. Are you listening?

So have you identified the nation or nations which you are battling right now? In the past? What are the areas you need help in? In what areas are your strengths? Know that your strengths are rarely the areas which you need the training in. Have you identified your internal battles? **Just remember, For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.** (Eph. 6:12 ESV) It is not the person you fight, but the spirit controlling that person. This is the battle ground.

Shavua Tov!