

"Is War Wrong?" By Kent Heaton

(From the Question Box: "Is war wrong ... as in killing other human beings which violates God's law of 'Thou shalt not kill?'")

Jesus said, "But when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be troubled; for such things must happen, but the end is not yet" (Mark 13:7). The reality of war is that as long as man will live on the earth he will die from the cruel nature of war. The Bible is filled with wars fought by the righteous and the unrighteous. God used war to punish His people. War is the conflict burning within man against his fellow man.

James defines the nature of war when he writes, "Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask" (James 4:1-2). The Lord fought righteous battles but men fight wars for their own lust whether lust for power, land, greed or revenge.

The Ten Commandments forbade killing. The meaning of the phrase "Thou shalt not kill" is "You shall not murder" (Ex. 20:13). Darrell Hymel in his book, "A Topical Study Of The Law Of Moses" writes: "The word RATSAAH (kill) referred to murder (Ex. 21:12-14; Num. 35:16-18) and manslaughter (Num. 35:6, 11, 16-21; Deut. 4:42; Josh. 20:3) ... This does not forbid capital punishment (Gen. 9:5-6). In the three chapters following the Ten Commandments there are at least eight offenses named for which God commanded that men be executed. The apostles Paul and Peter believed in capital punishment (Acts 25:11; Rom. 13:4; 1Peter 2:13-15). Neither does "thou shalt not murder" forbid war. Wars were frequently instituted by God Himself (Ex. 15:1; Deut. 20:1; Ex. 17:16; Num. 10:9)." [page 42]

War is a terrible tragedy that takes away innocence never to be recovered. As people of God we must constantly offer prayers for our leaders. "Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior" (1Tim. 2:1-3).

Yves M. Congar wrote, "We often hear it said: 'If God existed there would be no wars.' But it would be truer to say: 'If God's laws were observed there would be no wars.'" [God, Man and the Universe, 1950]

The man who fears the Lord "will not be afraid of evil tidings; His heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord" (Psalms 112:7).

"Are You Interested In Heaven?"

(Or, "What the preacher asked when he called on me about my poor attendance")

"What a question to ask me, preacher! Why, of course I'm interested in heaven; anybody that believes the Bible is interested in Heaven. That's the reason I was baptized by old Brother Faithful over at Piney Slab Holler back in... Well, I just don't remember the date I was baptized."

"What's that? Where am I going to worship? Why, I go once in a while over to Laodicea where brother Smoothit preaches. You say he's been gone from there about three years or more? Well, I didn't know it had been that long since I had been to church. 'Course now, I've been busy. And then, I haven't been feeling very well, and the weather hasn't been what it should have been. But brother, I'm interested in heaven."

"Where does my family go to worship? Why they don't go anywhere! You know how my wife is. Oh, you ain't never met my wife? Well, that woman just won't hear anything about the church, and wouldn't get the kids ready and take 'em to Bible study, and you know it's not a man's place to do that. I tell you, I just don't see how I've stayed interested in heaven and lived with that woman. I've put up with more from her than Dan ever put up with his wife, Beersheba."

"Do I take a gospel paper? Naw sir, I don't. I took one once, and it just laid around the house, and I never had time to read it. Time I get all the newspapers and magazines read, it was time to go to bed, so I just don't send them anymore money."

"How much have I given to the church? Now, just a minute preacher! You can ask all the questions you want to, but when you ask me about my money, you've gone a mite too far! It's none of your business how much I give to the Lord, and it's nobody else's business either. That's one thing I never do, go around bragging about how much I give. And when people ask me like you did, I ain't going to tell them. The very idea, askin' me if I was interested in heaven and then trying to find out how much I've been givin' to the Lord." (via Gospel Spotlight, Little Rock, Arkansas)

Our Father's Eyes

"I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3).
"Seek the LORD while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (Isa. 55:6-7).

Carl Michalson once told about playing with his young son one afternoon. They were tussling playfully on their front lawn, when Michalson accidentally hit the young boy in the face with his elbow. It was a sharp blow full to his son's face. The little boy was stunned by the impact of the elbow. It hurt, and he was just about to burst into tears. But then he looked into his father's eyes. Instead of anger and hostility, he saw there his father's sympathy and concern; he saw there his father's love and compassion. Instead of exploding into tears, the little boy suddenly burst into laughter. What he saw in his father's eyes made all the difference! (From Some Things are too Good not to Be True, by James W. Moore, p. 43)

The sharp blow of God's Word is "repent or perish." However, look into the Father's eyes. What He offers is forgiveness. He will abundantly pardon those who repent and turn from their sins.

A Moments Wisdom

A person with a closed mind can get by if he keeps his mouth closed.
Fewer marriages would skid, if more who said, "I do" — did.
A man without principle never draws much interest.

It is easier to float a rumor than to sink one.
The brook would lose its song if you took the rocks away.
A hypocrite is like a pin — points one way and heads the other.