

Life in the Shadow of Conflict

Scripture Reading — Deuteronomy 20:1-9

Do not be afraid ... because the Lord your God ... will be with you.
Deuteronomy 20:1

For all their horror, wars don't totally snuff out some of the brighter joys of life. Romance, marriage, and birthday celebrations go on during wartime, despite inconveniences and shortages of food and fuel.

God's people would go to war whenever he called on them. "Your friends are our friends; your enemies are ours," they had promised when they pledged to keep God's covenant with them (see Exodus 23:31-24:4). Thus, all men of fighting age would leave their homes, families, and gardens. There was little that could exempt them from war. But some exceptions were allowed, probably on the basis of compassion in light of God's covenant promises. The army officers recognized also that paralyzing fear on the battlefield could dishearten soldiers from their mission against God's enemies.

But for Christians there are no exemptions in the struggle against God's ancient enemy. The devil's relent-less pursuit can make it difficult to enjoy fully God's gifts of everyday life, but Christ gives strength to withstand. Moses' provision for enjoying God's blessings in the shadow of conflict hints at the time when there will be "no more death or mourning or crying or pain" (Revelation 21:4). Until then, may we not let the darkness rob us of joy in this life, knowing that God's light has overcome the darkness.

Prayer

God of grace, thank you for your goodness and the beauty of this life. Help us to be faithful as we await the fullness of your glory in this shadowland. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Devotion topics: [Bible](#), [Books of the Bible](#), [Deuteronomy](#)

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