

## KILLING, MURDER AND MILITARY DUTY : PART 1

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A Discussion Regarding Killing And The Reasons For War, Christian Militia Groups, God's Protection, The Office Of A Prophet, Surrender In War, And Obeying God Or Government

This article is a continuation of some of the ideas I first expressed in my article entitled "Killing and the Phinehas Priesthood". In this article I will be addressing the issue of killing as it applies to those Christians who face the dilemma of currently serving in, or having previously served in the armed forces, as well as a number of other important related issues. In the Book of Exodus, we find the Lord saying to Moses:

"Thou shalt not kill"  
Exodus 20:13, KJV

As stated in the previous article, despite this strict commandment, throughout the Old Testament we find the ancient Israelites going into battle after battle slaying their enemies WITH THE BLESSING OF GOD. In one particular battle, they only won as long as Moses held his hands up in the air holding the rod of God. Whenever he would put his hand down, the battle would turn against them. Finally, the Prophet was so tired that they had to give him a rock to sit on, and Aaron and Hur had to help Moses hold his arms in the air until the sun went down:

"Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim. And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun. And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. And the LORD said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven."  
Exodus 17:8-14, KJV

At first glance it appears that there is an inconsistency in these verses which may be quite confusing to some. In one instance, we have the Lord saying "Thou shalt not kill", but then turning around and condoning the battles of the Hebrew children against their enemies. As I explained in "Killing

and the Phinehas Priesthood", there is absolutely no contradiction here. While the Lord generally frowns upon murder, the Hebrew nation's campaign to eradicate the pagan nations from the land of Canaan was viewed by God as a necessary extermination, just as a pest controller will exterminate rats, cockroaches, or other vermin from one's home or business. The question then arises: How does all of this relate to modern-day Christians and the war-filled world in which we live?

Being familiar with the Scriptures since my youth, I have never felt comfortable with the idea of going to fight the wars of the United States of America, especially since, in my view, their motives have always been in question. Such was the case with the Viet Nam war which was still in progress when I was at the age to be drafted. As a young Christian, I firmly stood my ground with the draft board and thankfully was not made to go to war or to serve in the military in any capacity. Instead of destroying lives, I was dedicating myself to giving new life to others by helping people to know Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. Thus, while some were engaged in the war in Viet Nam, either by choice, or because of the military draft, I was engaged in a spiritual war to loose those who were bound by Satan. As Paul said to Timothy:

"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."  
1 Timothy 6:12, KJV

As the words of the Apostle Paul make very clear, in God's eyes, being a soldier for Jesus Christ is indeed a very honourable and legitimate profession. If you are interested in a more in-depth look at what it means to truly live the Life of Faith and give all to serve the Lord, please refer to such articles as "Where Are the First Century Churches?" and "The Parable of the Sower: Salvation and Service". They present a strong challenge for all Christians everywhere.

In thinking on this issue of war and killing, I recall an answer I received from a preacher many years ago. This man of God recounted the now-famous story of Sergeant Alvin York who, as I recall, was a backwoodsman and dedicated Christian. Because of his sharpshooting skills, he found himself performing military duty during World War I. As a child, I remember watching a biographical movie made about this man. I believe it was Gregory Peck who starred in the leading role as Sergeant York. To continue, the overall statement made by this preacher is that sometimes it is necessary to kill the evil folks, in that particular case the Germans, in order to save the innocent. There is a degree of wisdom in the answer he gave, but still we must ask ourselves: Is this type of killing justifiable with God, or is it just a ploy used by the Government to try to erase the guilt many young men feel when they are called to go to war?

Putting aside the wars of the ancient Israelites, reflect on the many wars, revolutions and skirmishes which have been waged in our more recent history: the Christian Crusades, the French Revolution, the American Revolution, the Civil

War, the Bolshevik Revolution, WWI, WWII, the Korean War, the Viet Nam War, the war in Afghanistan, the Iran-Iraq war, the Gulf War, the continuing Arab-Israeli conflict which could break out into full-scale war at any time, the unrest in Northern Ireland between Catholics and Protestants, tribal wars in Africa, civil war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, guerrilla uprisings against repressive governments throughout Latin America, and lastly, the assumed role of "peacekeeper" the American government has apparently taken in fighting ruthless dictators, communism and other tyrants worldwide. Just looking at this list, it is easy to see the fulfillment of Jesus' own words regarding conditions during the Endtime when He said:

"And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows."  
Matthew 24:6-8, KJV

Clearly, we live in a world which is at war with itself, so we must ask ourselves: Are any of these wars and conflicts justifiable or condoned in the eyes of God? To begin to answer this question, perhaps we need to consider the motives which instigate these wars. The Bible clearly defines the true motive for war. The Apostle James gave a very definitive answer when he said:

"From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?"  
James 4:1, KJV

Lust is a love for oneself, rather than a love for God and fellow man. We could also describe it as greed, putting our own wants and needs before those of others. On a personal level we may lust for power, or perhaps for money, or for fame, or perhaps we lust after some person. On a national level, a country's government may be greedy for oil or for other natural resources, or perhaps it desires to expand its national territory or its political influence. Economic gain has also been a motivation in some of our recent wars. Regardless of what the motivating factor might be, the result is always the same: confrontations, either on a family level, on a neighborhood or city level, or on a national or international level. This all comes about because governments and people fail to take heed to the wise counsel given by the Apostle Paul when he said:

"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."  
Philippians 4:11, KJV

Just prior to His Crucifixion, when the Roman governor Pontius Pilate asked Jesus if He were the King of the Jews, Jesus replied as follows:

". . . My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."

John 18:36, KJV

Clearly, Jesus was saying that we Christians belong to another Kingdom, the spiritual Kingdom of God. As such, it is not our place to become involved in the wars and political wrangling of worldly men and human governments.

Contrary to the violent at heart, and those who wage war on this Earth, Jesus tells us:

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the Earth."  
Matthew 5:5, KJV

When Peter drew his sword and cut off the ear of Malchus, the servant of the high priest following Jesus's betrayal, the Lord warned Peter to put away his sword saying that they that live by the sword shall be killed by the sword:

"Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough . . . And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him."  
Luke 22:36-38, 50-51, KJV

"Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"  
John 18:10-11, KJV

"And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?"  
Matthew 26:51-54, KJV

When the Lord sent His angel to the Apostle John to give him the message of the Book of Revelation, He continued this message of non-violence when He said:

"He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints."  
Revelation 13:10, KJV

In short, we reap exactly what we sow. If we sow war and destruction, sooner or later, we will likewise reap the same things upon ourselves. Life is indeed a boomerang, and God is the one who is keeping the score.

Several decades ago, I recall speaking to a Christian man who was totally convinced that in the Endtime, as with the ancient armies of Israel, God's Endtime Church would take up physical arms against the forces of the Endtime dictator known as the Antichrist, or Beast. Being one who detests war and all of the negative fruits of war, I found this person's viewpoint to be rather startling and quite contrary to my own beliefs. As I showed in "Killing and the Phinehas Priesthood", this attitude of committing violence is indeed embraced by some so-called Christian militia groups within the United States.

On the other hand, being the humans that we are, I can see how Endtime Believers could quickly acquire a deep hatred for the Beast and his forces when they begin their reign of terror and persecution. Would this motivate some to take up arms even though Jesus clearly said in John that His Kingdom is not of this world, and that His servants should therefore not fight? If sometime in the near future the antichrist forces were to invade your home and try to steal your children from you for their re-indoctrination schools, to make them properties of the State under the auspices of the "International Rights of the Child" or some other New World agenda, would you just idly stand by and let them do it? Will the Lord just expect His children to give themselves up as lambs for the slaughter so that both parents and their children are persecuted, tortured and killed, much like the early Christians who were used for sport in the Roman coliseums? Obviously, if and when the time comes, we will each have to make that decision on our own, based on our personal convictions. Bear in mind that the possibility of these things happening is based upon the understanding that the reign of the Beast will be worldwide in scope. As I have hinted in other articles, there is the possibility that his reign of terror may be limited to the Middle East. Time will certainly tell.

Personally, I have never owned a gun in my entire life and have managed just fine without one. God has blessed and protected me and my family for the peacemakers that we are. I detest guns and believe that having one in your home for your protection may be an accident just waiting to happen, or an invitation to disaster. I believe in the power of prayer. I believe as the Bible says, that the Lord encamps His angels around those who fear Him:

"The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."  
Psalm 34:7, KJV

The reality of this verse is evidenced throughout the Old Testament. As I discussed in my article, "The Children of God and Politics", as long as the children of Israel remained close to the Lord and obeyed His commandments, the Lord blessed and prospered them. They didn't even have to worry about their enemies. They had so many problems fighting their other enemies, that they left Israel alone. This was really due to the Lord protecting Israel. However, every time they strayed away from the Lord and worshipped pagan gods, the Lord was swift to send their enemies upon them. The most notable example of this is of course the

invasion of Israel and the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. A major part of the Old Testament consists of books written by Prophets who lived and prophesied before, during and after the invasion by Nebuchadnezzar. As can be seen by a thorough study of these books, the invasion was imminent. The spiritual leaders and governmental rulers of Israel knew it was coming, yet they did not forsake their evil ways, and ultimately they paid the price.

What is interesting to note about this time in Jewish history is the message which was being conveyed to both the rulers and the common people of that time by the Lord's Prophets. Being a Prophet in those days was not a popular thing. Consider the difficult job the Lord had given them to do: to expose the sins of Israel, to tell them to repent and get right with God, to warn them that they were going to be invaded and dominated. Of course, the leaders of the day did not want to hear this kind of talk. They wanted to shut up these Prophets of God. In the case of the young Prophet Jeremiah, he was accused of being a traitor to his country and thrown into prison by the underlings of King Zedekiah. The king later showed mercy to the young prophet by restricting him to the prison court and gave him a ration of bread to eat. However due to pressure from the enemies of Jeremiah, the Prophet was then thrown into a mud pit where he was later rescued by his Ethiopian friend Ebed-melech. You can read all about this in the thirty-seventh and the thirty-eighth chapters of the Book of Jeremiah.

At this point, the reader may be wondering what the connection is between this story of ancient Israel and our current topic. The full content of Jeremiah's message to Israel is the key issue here. In the world today, we live in a society based on fear. The psychology which persisted during the Cold War period is clear evidence of this. Day in and day out, Americans were told that we had to watch out for and fight against communism. The whole justification given by the American government during the Viet Nam War was that we had to stop communism from spreading throughout SouthEast Asia. Many Americans became so paranoid that they imagined that there might be a communist lurking behind every bush, or maybe on every American college campus, or in every youth group sit-in. We were made to believe that there were enemies all around, whether they were real or imagined. In fact, one theory holds that former President John F. Kennedy was assassinated because some members of the right-wing factions of American government feared he was selling America into the hands of the communists.

The point is, if we as individuals or as a nation are right with God and pleasing Him, if we are truly a Christian nation, then we should have nothing to fear. As the verse from Psalm thirty-four says, He will indeed encamp His angels round about us and protect us, IF we fear Him, and that is the key here. In the days of ancient Israel, it is obvious that they no longer feared the Lord as they should have. After all, if they had, they wouldn't have gone a whoring after literally dozens of false pagan gods. It is because they no longer feared the Lord and openly rebelled against Him that the judgments of God became imminent upon Israel. Exactly what was the full content of Jeremiah's

message? Did he tell King Zedekiah and the people to rebel and fight against the coming Babylonian army? No, quite to the contrary. He told them to surrender:

"Then said Jeremiah unto Zedekiah, Thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel; If thou wilt assuredly go forth unto the king of Babylon's princes, then thy soul shall live, and this city shall not be burned with fire; and thou shalt live, and thine house: But if thou wilt not go forth to the king of Babylon's princes, then shall this city be given into the hand of the Chaldeans, and they shall burn it with fire, and thou shalt not escape out of their hand. And Zedekiah the king said unto Jeremiah, I am afraid of the Jews that are fallen to the Chaldeans, lest they deliver me into their hand, and they mock me. But Jeremiah said, They shall not deliver thee. Obey, I beseech thee, the voice of the LORD, which I speak unto thee: so it shall be well unto thee, and thy soul shall live. But if thou refuse to go forth, this is the word that the LORD hath shewed me:"  
Jeremiah 38:17-21, KJV

Jeremiah was basically telling the king to surrender and to submit to the king of Babylon. Like other Prophets who preached during his time, he knew that this was a judgment come from the Lord to punish the house of Israel, a judgment which would last for seventy years. This is why Jeremiah was hated and deemed a traitor. Notice that rather than fear the words of the Lord through the Prophet, we are told that Zedekiah feared his own people more.

Consider in our modern day, for example, if during the era of the Cold War, a communist invasion of America seemed imminent. The typical American attitude, the typical military attitude, would be to go down fighting, and anyone who wouldn't pick up a gun to defend America against "those dirty commies" would be considered a coward and a traitor, just like Jeremiah and other Prophets were. If some person of God were to say, "No, don't fight against the communists, this is a judgment come from God", he would be laughed at and scorned, spit upon and probably thrown in jail just as was the young Prophet Jeremiah, accused of siding with the enemy.

That God used one nation to punish another is evident throughout the Old Testament. Time after time Israel was harassed by her enemies when she strayed from the Lord. If America claims to be the Christian nation of the world, why should she be any different from ancient Israel? If the Lord's Prophets told the people of Israel not to resist King Nebuchadnezzar, would He expect anything less of His children today if such a threat existed? I think not. Is it really "better to be dead than Red" as the famous saying goes? Is it better to be dead than alive? Apparently King Zedekiah thought so. He didn't take heed to the words of the Prophet Jeremiah, but rather chose to rebel against the King of Babylon. As a result, his immediate family and all of the leadership was slain, and the king's eyes were plucked out and he was carried to Babylon where he died in prison:

"And the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes: he slew also all the princes of Judah in Riblah. Then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of

Babylon bound him in chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his death."  
Jeremiah 52:10-11, KJV

The leadership of Israel did not have to die. Jeremiah told them that their lives would be spared if they just accepted the invasion as being a chastisement from God for their many sins. But they refused to listen. What would Americans do today if such a threat were present? Considering how far they have strayed away from God, and how haughty and self-confident they have become, I don't doubt that they would suffer a similar fate as that of King Zedekiah and his cronies. They wouldn't see the invasion as a punishment from God.

Getting back to the issue of owning a gun, if one does not have faith in the Lord, then obviously, they will have to provide for their own protection in another way. Thus, we have a society living in fear dangerously armed with handguns, automatic weapons and other lethal weapons. If riots and revolution ever do break out in the continental United States Of America as some foresee happening in the near future, it will definitely be a real bloodbath!

In "Killing and the Phinehas Priesthood", I shared the many different Hebrew words which are all translated as "kill" in the Old Testament of the Authorized King James Bible. While the Hebrews did use specific words to convey a different form of killing, this still leaves us with a dilemma, and that is this: Who then has the rightful authority to determine what is to be considered justifiable killing, and what is to be considered murder in our modern society? What gives human governments the right to determine what is legitimate war, and what isn't? From a Biblical perspective, it would seem that God is the only One who has the right to do this, as He is the one who gave us life to begin with. He is the one who breathes the Breath of Life into every baby that is created. It is not just merely a biological process. Remember, Adam was formed from the dust of the ground as a whole man, but until God breathed the Breath of Life into him, he was just a dead lifeless body. It is God who puts that spark of life inside a mother's womb. All things were and are created by the Will of God:

"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:"  
Colossians 1:16, KJV

"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."  
Revelation 4:11, KJV

In the Old Testament, the determination as to who lived and who died was made directly by the Lord Himself. As I explain in my article "The Children of God and Politics", under God's original plan, the children of Israel were not meant to be governed by an earthly king, but rather by Prophets and Judges chosen and anointed directly by God. The Lord spoke directly with these people via dreams, revelations,



miraculous appearances, etc. These Prophets and Judges would then convey God's messages to the people. It was because of these direct revelations that the ancient Israelites were so successful in their battles against the pagan armies while conquering the Promised Land. When the Lord told them to fight, they would fight, and if He told them not to, then they wouldn't. As long as they looked to Him for direct guidance and didn't worship the pagan gods and idols, the Lord blessed them. Unfortunately, after the children of Israel demanded an earthly king, thus rejecting the Lord's direct supervision and guidance, things really began to fall apart at the seams. While they did inherit the Promised Land, their history from that time until today has been one plagued with many problems.

In our world today, governments no longer have this direct connection or revelation from God. In fact, many, if not most of them, have even rejected the belief in a Supreme Being. As such, most decisions they make nowadays are made in their own strength and wisdom, which is totally contrary to the Word of God:

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."  
Proverbs 3:5-6, KJV

Being the imperfect institutions that human governments are, should we even trust that their judgment is the same as God's judgement? After all, as we are told by the Prophet Isaiah:

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."  
Isaiah 55:8-9, KJV

Unless one is a Believer and has the mind of Christ, as is spoken about by the Apostle Paul, how do we know that their decisions are the correct ones? Questions like this one are particularly of concern to sincere Christians who are faced with the possibility of serving military duty, or who are already serving in some branch of the armed services. One set of verses which are invariably mentioned by those who find themselves in such a predicament, are the following written by Paul in his Epistle to the Romans:

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:"  
Romans 13:1-3, KJV

In a case like this where a Christian person has either unwisely chosen military duty, or else has been forced into serving his country through mandatory laws or a draft, the only thing that we can do is to pray for him. More

specifically, we should pray that God will make a way for him to get out of that situation if it is at all possible. Consider what Paul said in his Epistle to the church at Corinth when he was dealing with them regarding their sexual sins:

"Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:"  
Isaiah 59:1, KJV

"For with God nothing shall be impossible."  
Luke 1:37, KJV

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."  
Matthew 21:22, KJV

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."  
1 Corinthians 10:13, KJV

Most of us underestimate the power of prayer. God can and will do miracles if we have the faith and are desperate enough. People have been known to be released from military service due to their Christian beliefs. As stated previously, I personally was dead set against the Viet Nam war. I stood my ground as a Christian, and thanks to the prayers of friends, the Lord did not fail me. It really comes down to how much faith and conviction you have as a Christian. How much are you willing to go against the System? If you do manage to be released from your military obligation, how much are you willing to endure any verbal or physical persecution, or discrimination which might come your way because of your decision?

Please go to part two for the conclusion of this article.

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KILLING, MURDER AND MILITARY DUTY : PART 2

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A Discussion Regarding Killing And The Reasons For War,  
Christian Militia Groups, God's Protection, The Office Of A  
Prophet, Surrender In War, And Obeying God Or Government

One point worth mentioning is that some people convert to

Christianity after they are already in the military establishment. What about them? As previously stated, prayer does work miracles, but at the same time, if the Lord does not deliver you from your situation, then perhaps He has a reason for it. Maybe He has chosen you to reach people within the military establishment, just as Joseph, Daniel, Esther and a few others worked from within the governments of their day. The main thing you need to remember is that God does not make mistakes, and even your own mistakes can be used for God's glory if you cry out to Him. Who knows, if you start preaching the Gospel to all of your comrades, maybe they will get so tired of you that they will gladly boot you out of the service! But if not, then He must have a specific reason for having you where you are. As Paul said in his letter to the Romans:

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."  
Romans 8:28, KJV

Another point which is important to remember is that as long as you have free will, absolutely no one can force you to pick up a gun and kill another human being. Neither can they force you to fly a jet, launch a missile, lay body-destroying mines, use biological or chemical weapons, remote controlled devices such as drones, electromagnetic weapons, or whatever other toys of hellish destruction the military uses these days, and they are indeed devilish.

If you protest strongly enough, you will hopefully never even find yourself in a situation where you will be confronted by these things. Perhaps you will be assigned to a nonviolent post such as working in an office. Of course, as I already mentioned, you must also realize that you should be prepared for some form of retribution from those people who are more patriotic and macho than yourself, including your commanding officers and your fellow soldiers who may view you as a wimp. In the final analysis, you must decide beforehand how much punishment and/or ridicule you are prepared to take for the cause of Christ. Here are some verses which may be an encouragement to you in your time of need:

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."  
Romans 8:18, KJV

"But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."  
1 Peter 4:13, KJV

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."  
2 Timothy 3:12, KJV

In conclusion, what is deemed to be murder, and what is considered to be justifiable killing, is clearly determined by those in power according to their own agendas, regardless of what the Bible might say. While killing a person in a convenience store to obtain money to buy drugs is viewed as

cold-blooded murder, forcefully going into a foreign country under false pretenses to grab control of their natural resources or to incapacitate a leader who does not tow the line of your government is viewed as a heroic act. In short, using force and violence, whether it be on a personal or national level, is wrong. In this day and age of high tech society and fast living, it seems that we no longer know how to use talk and peaceful diplomacy to resolve our differences. While diplomatic meetings are still held, sometimes those involved in them do not trust each other and merely exchange boldface lies while they shake hands with a plastic smile etched on their faces. Sometimes such meetings are only used to buy more time while both parties continue to build up their military forces in preparation for an inevitable military confrontation.

What is particularly sad about this confrontational mentality is that even young children are growing up with the mistaken idea that if a person wants something bad enough, the only way to get it is through force and violence. This is easily observable in children who are constantly exposed to all kinds of violence on television. If that weren't enough, some irresponsible parents think nothing of buying their children such things as toy guns, soldiers, video games full of violence and destruction, etc. Truly, these misguided parents will reap what they sow, for as we are told in the Book of Proverbs:

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."  
Proverbs 22:6, KJV

This verse can work in either direction. As parents, we can help our children to grow up into God-fearing responsible loving adults, or we can watch as they turn into unloving, selfish violent children of hell who think nothing of resorting to violence to achieve their goals.

In conclusion, wars today are NOT the result of some holy righteous cause ordained by the Lord as in the days of ancient Israel, but are rather the result of a lustful greed for power and wanting more than one's share of the pie. Technologically developed nations consume much more than their share of natural resources, while weaker developing nations barely get by. To sustain their lavish lifestyles, these richer nations will use their armies, exercise unfair economic practices, incite civil unrest in foreign nations to weaken their defenses, and use other unscrupulous methods in order to steal from their neighbors. Power is the name of the game, and those who are on top are the ones who make the rules, and that includes the rules regarding killing, murder and war.

Regardless of what worldly governments or worldly people may do, as Christians, we must learn to have a clean conscience before the Lord and to do what is right in His eyes, even when it is not popular in the eyes of men. After all, as the Apostle Paul once said:

". . . let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind . . .  
So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."  
Romans 14:5b, 12, KJV

I trust that this study has been a help and an encouragement to you. As a supplement to this article, I suggest you read some of my other papers on the topics of politics, war and violence such as "The Children of God and Politics," "Revelation's Babylon the Great", "Killing and the Phinehas Priesthood", "The Mystery of Cornelius the Centurion", and "The Fruits of Disobedience".

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