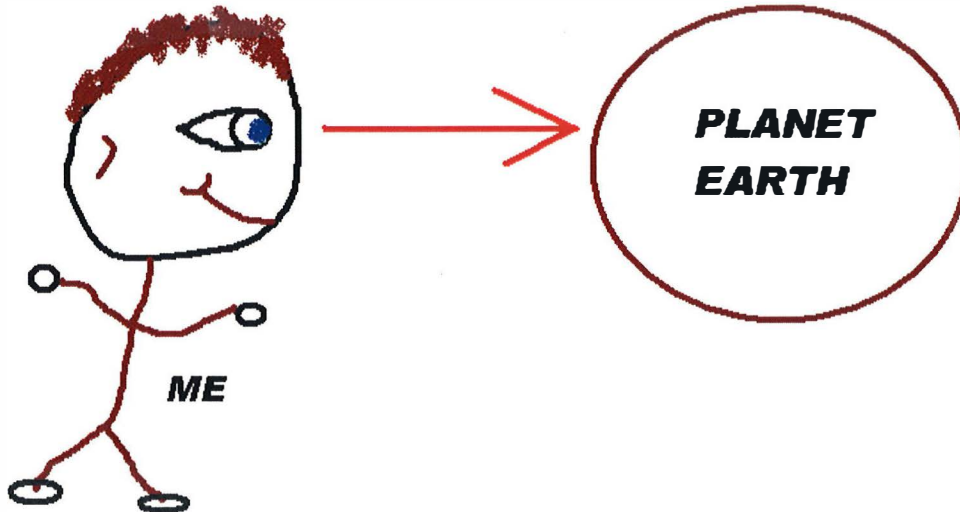


CHAPTER 9

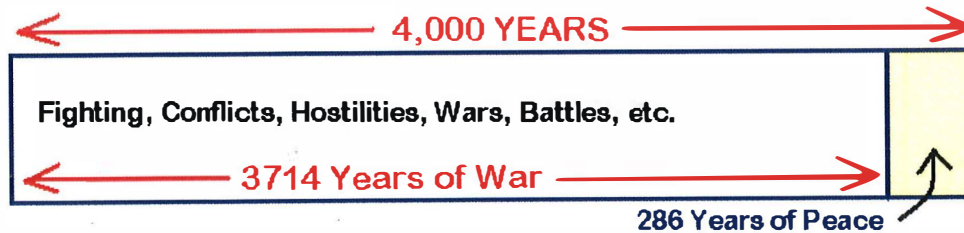
THE PROBLEM OF WAR

Looking at the World



War is a real problem in our world. Are there any wars or battles going on in the world right now? Where? Do you know why they are fighting? Does one country have what another country wants?

Man has been fighting and killing ever since Cain killed Abel (Genesis 4)! According to the Society of International Law at London, during the last 4,000 years there have been only 286 years of peace in the world:



On planet earth, years of war are much more common than years of peace! Years of peace are very rare (like a four-leaf clover).

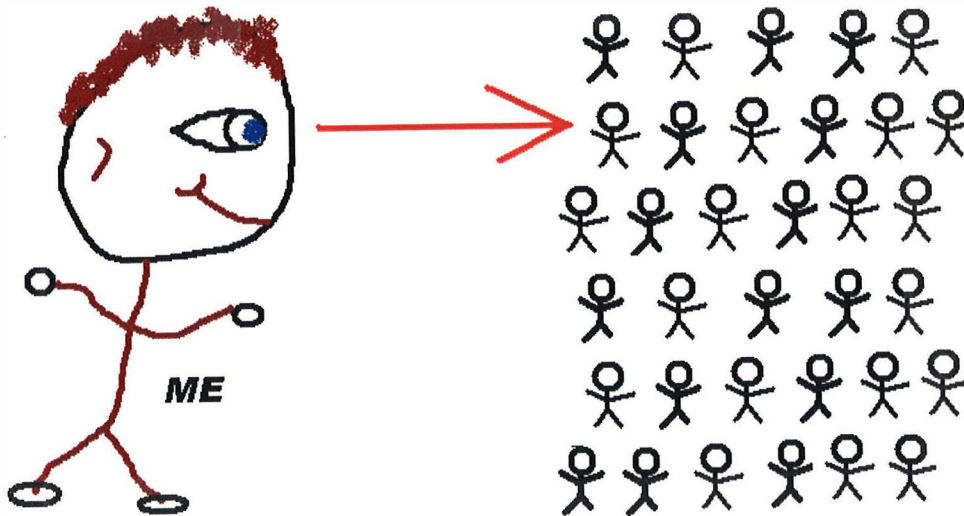
Is modern man more peaceful than ancient man? Does the world today have fewer wars than it used to have? Can you think of any wars that have been fought in the last 150 years? Have there been any world wars (involving many nations)?

What kinds of **weapons** did men use in Bible times?

What kinds of weapons do we have today?

When David fought Goliath, did he have nuclear weapons? _____ In the days of Christ, did the Roman soldiers have aircraft which could drop bombs? _____ Are the weapons we have today more deadly and more destructive and more harmful than the weapons that were used years ago?

Looking at the People in the World



Do you know anyone who is a soldier? Do you know anyone who has fought in a war? Has your father or uncle ever been in a war?

Many lives are lost in a war. When there is war there is fighting. When there is fighting, there is killing and death. Have you ever been to a cemetery and seen the tombstone of a soldier who died on the battlefield? In our country there is a special holiday in which Americans remember those people who have died on the fields of battle. What is the name of this holiday?

These men gave their lives so that we could live in peace and be free. This sacrifice of human lives reminds us of what Jesus did for us. He died so that we might be "free from _____" (Romans 6:18). "If the _____ therefore shall make you _____, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).

Why are there wars? Why is there such killing and bloodshed? Why are people not loving and peaceful? Why don't countries destroy all of their weapons and decide never to fight each other again? Why don't we have "Peace on earth and goodwill toward men"?

Where do wars and fightings come from? The answer is found in James 4:1-2. Wars and fightings come from man's own **lust (sinful desires)**: "Ye _____ and have not: ye _____ and desire to have" (James 4:2). What is lust? Lust is that strong, sinful desire to have what is not ours! The person who is full of lust says: "**I must have it and I must have it now! I must have it even if it does not really belong to me!**" What is war? War is trying to keep what you have or trying to get what you don't have! What are some of the things that men and countries "**desire to have**" which may result in a fight or in a war?

Land	Gold
_____	_____

Suppose that there were only three people on a small, tropical island and only one banana tree. These people have a choice. They can lovingly share with each other or they can fight with each other and have a war over the banana tree. If just one of the people selfishly says, "I want all of the bananas for myself," then there will probably be a war on the island!

Man's sin and man's lust and man's selfishness is the reason for war. In a sinless world there would be no wars. In the future kingdom age, when Christ is King over all the earth, will there be war (Isaiah 2:4)? _____ But sinful men do not know the "way of P _____" (Romans 3:17). The real problem is the sinful heart of man.

In a sinful world, wars and killing are sometimes necessary. One of the Ten Commandments says, "Thou shalt not _____" (Exodus 20:13). This word "kill" should be translated as "murder." See Matthew 19:18--"Thou shalt do no M _____."

There is a difference between murder and killing. **Murder** is the wicked killing of another person. This killing was not done accidentally, but done deliberately, sometimes with carefully planned. **Killing** is a more general word which simply means "to put to death." All murder is killing but not all killing is murder.

Suppose a man were to come into your house and try to murder your Mother. Your Father would have to try to stop him and sometimes the only way to stop a murderer is to kill him. If your Father were to do this, it would not be murder. He would be killing a man in order to protect the life of his family.

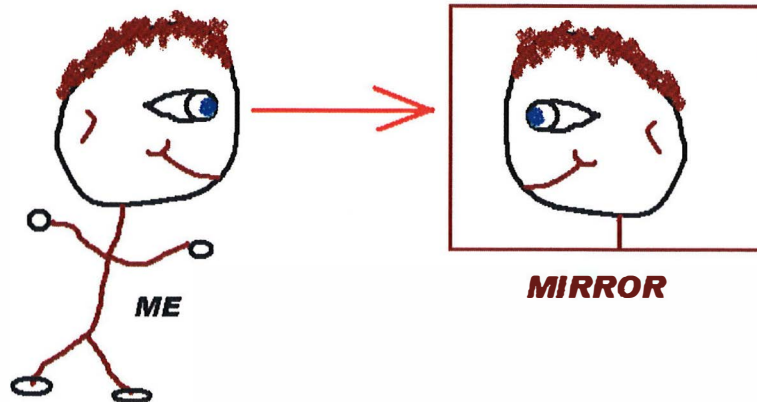
Policemen wear guns. Why is this so? Suppose a madman were at the top of a building shooting people in the streets below. What should the policeman do? How should the policeman stop him? If the only way to stop him is to shoot and kill him, would this be murder? The policeman is responsible to protect the lives of innocent citizens.

Sometimes it is necessary for the government to put a wicked criminal to death. Read Genesis 9:6. The man who sheds blood is a murderer. If a man murders someone else, then his blood should be shed. We call this capital punishment. Capital punishment is not murder, but it is killing. There are some crimes that are so serious that the guilty person deserves the death penalty.

Just as a father needs to protect his family and just as a policeman needs to protect the people on the streets, so also **soldiers** protect those who live in a country. What if our country had no soldiers and no weapons? What if our country had no Army or Navy or Air Force? What would happen then if another country were to invade our country? Would we be able to stop them? Would we be able to protect ourselves? Would we be able to defend ourselves? Would we have to surrender? Would we lose our freedom? Suppose that this invading country were to take over our government and then set forth some new laws such as these: "All churches must be closed down." "All Bibles must be burned!" "People will no longer be able to vote for the leaders that they want." "You cannot own any property; the government will own everything." "Many will be killed and many will be put in prisons and in mental hospitals." Would we be sorry that we did not stop the enemy from taking over our country?

War (fighting and killing) is never pleasant or enjoyable, but in a sinful world it is sometimes necessary. The life of a policeman or the life of a soldier is sometimes very difficult. Such a man may even have to lay down his life in the line of duty. Many men have died so that we might live in freedom and in peace. Many have been wounded and injured and crippled and disabled and hospitalized. Have you thanked God for these men and for their service to our country? Why do we celebrate Memorial Day?

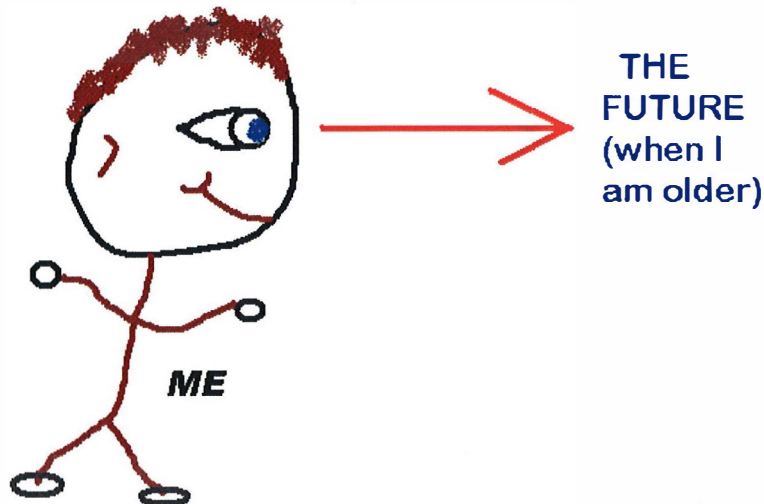
Looking At Myself



As we think about **war** we often think about ourselves. Will I ever have to fight in a war? This is a question that young men often think about. Many countries even have women soldiers.

Will my country ever be invaded? Will enemy soldiers ever set foot in our country? Will enemy bombers ever fly overhead? Will I ever have to flee for shelter underground because of a bomb attack? Thousands of people have died or have been injured because of war. Will I be one of them? What is ahead for me: **war or peace?**

Looking At The Future



Did Jesus tell us that there would be wars and that nation would rise up against nation (Matthew 24:6-7)? _____ Should we be troubled and worried about these things (Matthew 24:6)? _____ Jesus told us just what to expect! The Lord knows all about these things. If the weatherman calls for a sunny day and it rains, then we might get upset because we were not expecting rain. If the weatherman calls for a rainy day and it rains then we do not get so upset because we were expecting it to rain. The Lord Jesus told us what to expect. He told us to expect wars. See Matthew 24:6 and circle the correct answer:

- Wars will never come to pass.
- Wars might come to pass.
- Wars will not come to pass.
- Wars must come to pass.

As we look farther into the future we learn that there will be a time of peace on planet earth. But before peace can come to this earth the "P _____ of P _____" (Isaiah 9:6) must come to this earth. Who is the Prince of Peace? _____ He's the only One who can bring true and lasting peace to this war torn world.

Who is the only One who can make wars to cease and stop (Psalm 46:8-9)? _____ Micah 4:2-3 talks about this time of peace when Christ will rule the earth: "He (the Lord) will teach us of _____ ways (verse 2)...neither shall they learn _____ any more" (verse 3). When Christ is King on this earth there will be no need for an Army or Navy or Air Force or soldiers or weapons! War shall be no more! How long will this peace last (Isaiah 9:7)? _____

Today even the animals fight and kill and eat each other. Will this be true during the kingdom (Isaiah 11:6-9)? Even the animals will be at peace with each other!

Yes, the Bible clearly teaches that there will be **peace on earth**, but **not yet!**

Today's World

Nations fighting each other (Matthew 24:7)

Weapons are needed (Joel 3:10)

We should expect war now.



Christ returns to earth as King!

Tomorrow's World

Nations at peace with each other (Micah 4:3)

Weapons are not needed (Micah 4:3)

We should expect peace after Christ comes.

Nuclear War

There is much talk today about "nuclear war." Do certain countries have nuclear weapons today? _____ Are these weapons very powerful and very deadly? _____ Could a nuclear bomb destroy a whole city? _____ Could nuclear weapons destroy a whole country? _____

There are enough nuclear weapons and other weapons in the world today to destroy a large portion of the earth's population. Many people are afraid that this will someday happen. They are afraid that a nuclear war may begin and that there would be no survivors. Is this possible?

Mankind will not be destroyed by nuclear war. The world that God made is not going to be destroyed by nuclear weapons. How do we know this?

Suppose everyone were to die in a nuclear war. If this were to happen, then would there be anyone left on earth when Christ returns? _____ But this is not what the Bible teaches. The Bible teaches that when Christ returns there will be many people still alive on the earth (Psalm 2:2; Rev. 19:11-19). Man will not be totally destroyed by war. The Bible clearly teaches that there will be people on earth.

This does not mean that nuclear weapons will never be used. **Such weapons have already been used!** The United States used nuclear weapons (actually atomic weapons) against the country of Japan to bring World War II to an end. Many people died, but it is very likely that many more people were saved because this terrible war ended soon after these bombs were dropped. Whether more atomic or nuclear bombs will be dropped in the future, God only knows. It is good to know that no disaster can take place unless God allows it.

A False Peace

The Bible teaches that before Christ comes to the earth there will be a false peace movement. There will be people saying "Peace and safety" (1 Thess. 5:3) when there really is no real peace and no real safety at all! Don't be fooled by this false peace movement. Many people want peace on earth, but remember this: **Only God can bring real peace to Planet Earth!** Many people reject God and refuse to trust the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour. Therefore they remain at war with God and this makes for wars on earth (see Ephesians 2:13-19). The most important thing is for a person to be saved and to have "peace with God" (Romans 5:1).

Looking To God



The real war is not between men. The real war is between men and God. Sinful man is at war with God! The last great battle will not be between the Americans and the terrorists. The last great battle will be between sinful men and God (see Psalm 2:2 and Revelation 19:19)! And God never loses!

What about you? Are you at war with God? Are you fighting God? The Bible says that at one time we were all God's enemies (Rom. 5:10). We were all like Saul (Paul) who was kicking against God (see Acts 9:5). Are you fighting against God? Do you want nothing to do with God's ways and God's Word and God's will?

God did something to bring this war to an end! God attacked the real problem, which is SIN. God sent His Son to the cross to die for our sins! God made it possible for man to have "P_____ with God" (Romans 5:1).

Have you surrendered to the living God? Have you ever said this: "Lord, I lose and You win! Thank you for dying for me so that I could be free from sin and have peace with God!"

The person who is on God's side can never lose! "If God be _____ us, who can be _____ us?" (Romans 8:31). But if God be against us, we are in trouble! Be on the winning side! Be a Christian soldier! God has never lost a battle and He will take care of all those who belong to Him! There may not be peace in the world, but there can be peace in your heart **right now!**

Remember the God of peace is always able to keep you in the middle of the peace of God, no matter what trouble or trials God may allow you to experience (Philippians 4:6,7,9). See also John 16:33.

"Peace I leave with you, my _____ I give unto you...Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be _____" (John 14:27).