SPIRITUAL WARFARE

THE SHOFAR SOUNDS -

IT'S A CALL TO WAR!
INTRODUCTION

This study should form the basis of any spiritual warfare campaign. Clearly there are elements of this article that relate to personal warfare - however, the battles described in taking the Land and fighting spiritual warfare on a strategic level (national or international) relates to the concept of corporate (Body of Messiah) warfare.

We look at the reasons for war, at the various types of war, and more importantly, we look at the rules of engagement in warfare.

I would suggest that God is always about justice and mercy—consequently He sets out the rules within which warfare can take place.

Any deviation from this pattern then results in God not being part of the battle, and possibly other consequences for those who do their own thing.

More importantly, God has an expectation of the role of leadership in these circumstances—so if you want to be aware of the role of an officer in the army, then it is essential that you study the leadership criteria.

Critically, this study highlights the common themes and ultimate goal that is defined in the war of entering the Land and the spiritual warfare battles that Paul calls the Body of Messiah to.
SPIRITUAL WARFARE: THE SHOFAR SOUNDS - IT’S A CALL TO WAR

The question at this stage is... what should our attitude towards war be? And importantly, is there a difference between war in the physical realm and war in the spiritual domain?

Firstly, it is vital to understand that the root cause of war is lust or simply sin. If we accept this statement, then we can see that we should be very careful to engage in war, especially in the physical domain, unless we have clear guidance from God, or we are fighting in self-defense.

James 4:1-2 What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask.

A) ASK YOURSELF WHY WE ARE FIGHTING THIS TIME?

As we work through the Bible we will note that there are different types of war. If we understand why we are in this position, it will help us with the battle strategy, as well as the long-term solution.

War is not pleasant - the consequences are relevant—which is why we should count the cost...I am not saying don’t go to war—just make sure it the right time and the right one for you.

WAR - Hebrew Strong’s 4421 / from 3898

- to fight, do battle, make war
- (Qal) to fight, do battle
- (Niphal) to engage in battle, wage war
- (Qal) to eat, use as food

(1) AN OBLIGATORY WAR (“milhemet hova”)

Joshua is instructed to enter the Land of Canaan and to seek out, as well as destroy all of the inhabitants. These Canaanites had showed no interest in anything else but to be involved in every abomination before God that they could. God knew that to allow them to partially remain would expose His people (who until now were slaves, or had lived in absolute protection in the wilderness).

This may sound severe, however, God had a purpose. He did not want any vestige of the pagan worship to remain, nor did He want anything to be left behind which could tempt His people into sin.

(Included in this abomination for which the total destruction was required was the issue of the giants in the land - the manner in which the Bible describes this makes it seem that it only refers to rather big people. This is not the case...
The consequence of the fallen angels taking the ordinary women resulted in mixed seed – a combination of the work of satan and mankind that in the physical produces after its own kind, giants with corrupted DNA.)

Paul speaks in 1 Corinthians 15:45 of the Principle of first in the natural before we can operate in the spiritual realm.

Clearly, this warfare starts off with the event, which is described as taking the Land - CANAAN

AND

Is mirrored in the Book of Ephesians where the Body of Messiah is instructed, to go to war to take back the Land.

Once again, we are to destroy the enemy completely, remove all pagan altars and redeem to the land so that we can build a Tabernacle of Living Stones.

What I want to highlight is the fact that the war of entering the Land in the physical, has now been transformed into a spiritual battle where we have to take our spiritual Land.

Every single tribe was required to serve in Joshua’s army. There were no exception—even the Levites were there to carry the ARK.
Today, every single believer has been positioned with a responsibility / gifting. We are expected to be ready to serve / to go to war - somewhere in the Body of Messiah. (Paul talks of some as knees, as feet, as hands - the implication is that no one can withdraw from the battlefield.)

Some people’s place is battleground action, for others it is merely guarding on the walls of the City.

**Ephesians 6:11-17** Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. 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. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

There are some who DO NOT want to go to war—who talk of grace and love and so forth.

Please remember - we will be at **WAR with AMALEK for all generations.**

**Exodus 17:15,16** And Moses built an altar and named it The LORD Is My Banner; saying, ‘The LORD has sworn [an oath]; the LORD will have war against [the people of] Amalek from generation to generation.’

Moses began the fight, Saul failed to deal with them, Esther had an amazing victory, and yet even in the aftermath of the 2nd World War, one of Hitler’s men still saw the relevance of Purim/Esther and still wanted to defeat God’s plans.

(2) **AN OPTIONAL WAR (“milhemet reshut”)**

David had gone to war in the very beginning of his reign to clear out all of the inhabitants of the land of Israel. However, towards the end of his reign, he starts to take on “other” kingdoms, not allocated by God.

This expansionistic war was started when he wanted personal greatness. One of the most relevant pictures in the Old Testament is the fact that the people of Israel NEVER seize the Land BECAUSE the people are unbelievers.

Once we embark on building a bigger and better kingdom, we cross the line quite easily from doing exactly what God wanted to trying to fulfill our own goals.

Look at the end of David’s reign:

- This is the time when the incident with Bathsheba occurs - murder, deceit and so forth.
- This is also the time when David decides that he wants to know how great he is, and goes out to ‘count’ the number of warriors in his army.
These types of battles occur today. Man decides that what he has accumulated is not enough. He then decides to go after another merger/acquisition.

(Please don’t only think in terms of business—how many churches are focused on becoming the biggest network of all times?)

What are the consequences of war?

Look at the number of hard working people that are retrenched, or look at all of the people who are refugees somewhere in the world today.

(3) **A WAR - AS A CONSEQUENCE OF SIN**

Many times we find that we are forced in warfare. We may believe that the enemy is treating us badly, and that we are the poor victims.

However, we, the Body of Messiah, (just like the Israelites of old) are at fault.

The people of God sin…NOT only as individuals, but also collectively as a nation.

Individual sin mounts up, at some point in time this behavior becomes the norm, and then very soon afterwards the nation accepts that behavior as the standard.

You only have to look at the behavior where ordinary people are inconvenienced, where riots take place and mobs takes over - assets are destroyed simply because the people did not get their way.

Look also at the level of corruption that we see in Governments today, look at the scandal where, unknown to the people, governments decide to spy on their own citizens.

It is at times like this that we must understand that we are in EXILE.

We may stand up to fight like the Deborah’s, like the Esther’s, and like the Gideon’s (Judges 7:1-8:21) of this world.

We have one more example that is worth mentioning in this category.

It's the case of where the people TRUST IN THE ARK more that they TRUST IN GOD,

They think that they can live as they choose and blatantly disobey God,
Yet, they want to grab the ARK when they are in trouble.

At one point in time, their enemies, the Philistines, attack and then find out that without God they are lost—and that’s also when they lose the ARK to the Philistines.

**1 Samuel 4:1-11** “But we are fighting to regain that which we have lost through disobedience to the Will of GOD.
Clearly this warfare **starts off** from the point where:

- The people **acknowledge** their sinful position
- The people **repent** and bring restitution where possible
- The people **return** to the Pathway set out by God.

4) **A WAR IN SELF DEFENSE**

Many times we go through life minding our own business. The Israelites were taking the journey through the wilderness, flowing the path set out by God. On a number of occasions various people groups will attack them out of fear, out of a concern that they will not keep to their word to pass by peacefully.

In these cases we have every right to defend ourselves. We must at all times adhere to the **rules of engagement set out in Deuteronomy 20**

Some examples are:

- Og of Bashan decides to attack: **Numbers 21:33-35, Deuteronomy 3:1-11**
- Sihon refuses safe passages and go out to fight the Israelites: **Numbers 21:21-26; Deuteronomy 2:26-36**
- Arad a king in the Negev attacks and captures some Israelites before he is defeated: **Numbers 21:1-3**

**Summary**

As you can see—it is important to define the war... it tells you why you are there, and it gives you an indication of the ‘pain’ of the victory. Everyone that attacks Israel / or the Body of Messiah, will be attacking God directly.

However, that would not apply to the cases where we are at war for personal gain, nor where we are struggling to come out of bondage from the consequences of Exile.

**Numbers 31:3** So Moses spoke to the people, saying, “Arm men from among you for the war, that they may go against Midian to execute the LORD’s vengeance on Midian. You shall send a thousand from each of the tribes of Israel to the war.” So there were provided, out of the thousands of Israel, a thousand from each tribe, twelve thousand armed for war. And Moses sent them to the war, a thousand from each tribe, together with Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, with the vessels of the sanctuary and the trumpets for the alarm in his hand.
B) ASK YOURSELF IF YOUR LEADERSHIP WAS APPOINTED BY GOD

There are many people trained up as warriors, and there are many who will be prepared to go to war for personal gain. Remember the story of Saul, who kept all the sheep and the cattle?

Personal gain is not always possessions, but many men and women want the glory of the absolute power that they have—an example of note in Hitler.

Personal gain in the church is very often in the form of the title of the next book, the TV show that they can be on, and so on.

If we read through the list of God’s appointees...what do we find?

- **Deborah**: someone who sat outside (not in) the city gates, helping others
- **Esther**: a queen who was prepared to die for her people
- **Joshua**: a man who walked in the shadow of Moses for years as a servant.
- **Gideon**: who needed confirmation upon confirmation that it was his calling

**NUGGET!** The attribute of Godly leadership is being prepared to be a servant-leader.

1. Do you see a man/leader who is prepared to sacrifice his own position/ego/title and move to support the community by raising them up?

2. Do you see a man that lifts up the arms of those in war?

3. Do you see a man who walks in justice, compassion and humility?

**Great leaders follow God’s pattern:**

(a) **Firstly**, the men are circumcised - that means we surrender our hearts to God and we choose not to rely on the Old Man

(b) **Secondly**, we remember the Passover—we acknowledge that we have been protected by the sacrifice made by Y’shua (Jesus).

(c) **Thirdly**, we develop our strategy based on the Word of God—we search for and listen to the Holy Spirit

C) RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

It is fairly clear that God would prefer that there be peace.

*Isaiah 2:3-4* It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the House of the LORD shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it, and many peoples shall come, and say:
“Come, let us go up to the Mountain of the LORD, to the House of the God of Jacob, that He may teach us His Ways and that we may walk in His paths.” For out of Zion shall go the law, and the Word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

And we find that this is also the Heart of Y’shua (Jesus) and in some of the teaching of Paul.

**Matthew 5:38-45** You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic let him have your cloak as well. And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you.

**Matthew 5:43** You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in Heaven. For He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

**Romans 12:17-21** “Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

However, He knows that we live in an imperfect world - and that man, together with our evil inclination and the works of the satanic kingdom, will fail to meet this standard.

It is Y’shua (Jesus) Himself that says that it is inevitable that wars will continue until He returns. And there is a time for peace and a time for war.

**Ecclesiastes 3:8** … a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.

**Mark 13:7-8** And when you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. This must take place, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. These are but the beginning of the birth pains.

God therefore lays down the rules of engagement - in the physical.

1) **When you go to battle know that God is with you.**

**Deuteronomy 20:2-3** And when you draw near to the battle, the priest shall come forward and speak to the people and shall say to them, ‘Hear, O Israel, today you are drawing near for battle against your enemies: let not your heart faint. Do not fear or panic or be in dread of them.’
Make sure that the spiritual goal is clearly in line with the Bible—make sure that you have a community of believers who are in agreement and are unified in the cause of the battle—make sure that the intercessors are aligned with the cause.

2) Do not let the newly married men go to war.

**Deuteronomy 20:5-7** “Then the officers shall speak to the people, saying, ‘Is there any man who has built a new house and has not dedicated it? Let him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man dedicate it. And is there any man who has planted a vineyard and has not enjoyed its fruit? Let him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man enjoy its fruit. And is there any man who has betrothed a wife and has not taken her? Let him go back to his house, lest he die in the battle and another man take her.’

God has determined that marriage has a very special place in His Kingdom—partly because marriage, more than anything else, reflects the image of unity and oneness the best.

God therefore determines that a married couple should experience the depth of this gift.

3) Do not take men who are afraid into battle

**Deuteronomy 20:8** And the officers shall speak further to the people, and say, ‘Is there any man who is fearful and fainthearted? Let him go back to his house, lest he make the heart of his fellows melt like his own.’

It is no shame not to be ready for battle, and not every battle is designed for all people - there is a time and a place where we can all contribute - find that place, and serve

4) Offer peace terms before you commence battle—

Every possible means of avoiding unnecessary bloodshed should be avoided at all cost. Any lengthy war, with huge losses of innocent bystanders, and displacement of people from their homes and livelihood would be an indicator of man’s evil intent.

**Deuteronomy 20:11** And if it responds to you peaceably and it opens to you, then all the people who are found in it shall do forced labor for you and shall serve you. But if it makes no peace with you, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it.
We look for capitulation of the victory—other than the enemy that could contaminate the holiness of the land, we should look to protect lives—war always has unintended consequences—(there are always wounded / dead / scared for life), you may have the victory, but in the homes of those who perish, you will have broken lives/destroyed relationships/ fatherless children for a long time

5) Do not harm the civilian, women, children and livestock

**Deuteronomy 20:14** ... but the women and the little ones, the livestock, and everything else in the city, all its spoil, you shall take as plunder for yourselves. And you shall enjoy the spoil of your enemies, which the LORD your God has given you.

GOD’S Word is clear, protect those who cannot protect themselves. We have not right to pull people into a war, or cause them to suffer consequences that we are the author of.

(Please note—in cases when we are in obligatory war—in other words entering and redeeming the land then this would not apply. In the case of war, in other circumstances described above this rule of engagement applies.)

6) Destroy utterly those (things) which would contaminate the land.

We cannot allow anything that is unclean/unholy to remain in the land. It is critical at this point, to highlight the fact that we must always make sure that we are know what God sees as unholy—men tend to build their own fences—Y’shua (Jesus) called them traditions—which we hold onto very securely and then treat these as if they are the Gold standard as to what constitutes Holy or not.

**Deuteronomy 20:17-18** ... but you shall devote them to complete destruction the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, as the LORD your God has commanded, that they may not teach you to do according to all their abominable practices that they have done for their gods, and so you sin against the LORD your God.

Paul is clear. We have to stand up against any spirit, occult/pagan practice that could influence the Body of Messiah. This implies that you have an understanding of exactly what happens in this world, that you have battle strategies ready when you see the enemy advance.

No compromise is acceptable—we must guard the walls of our city at all times.

7) Do not destroy the ecology—(the trees)

**Deuteronomy 20:19** When you besiege a city for a long time, making war against it in order to take it, you shall not destroy its trees by wielding an axe against them. You may eat from them, but you shall not cut them down. Are the trees in the field human, that they should be besieged by you?

That which God created is His—just as we have no right to willfully destroy nature, so too, we have a duty to make sure that His creation is maintained as He made it.
We cannot allow willful destruction of animals – for example: rhino/elephant/ecology and then pretend to be busy protecting the spiritual Kingdom. Tidy your land in the natural - pick up all litter - and give a clear message to the spiritual realm! Any thing that you allow in the physical will become an open door in the spiritual.

8) **Watch out for deception.**

The enemy will come with an attempt to sidetrack us. The Gibeonites – with old cloths, stale bread, and torn wine skins became a thorn in the flesh of the Israelites for years.

Be careful of that which appears right, good, and an absolute bargain…these people will be wolves in sheep’s cloths.

**D) STRATEGY AND TACTICS**

Whatever situation we find ourselves in, when we are faced with the act of war, then we should understand that God has given us the unique ability to strategize and plan our actions.

The reason for this is not only to **minimize the bloodshed and destruction**, but also to make sure that the unintended consequence of war do not impact significantly on the civilian population, the ecology and the children—the next generation.

The following are a few of the factors that are to be considered in the physical war in taking the Land.

As we go through these, I will add an observation describing how we apply these principles with the boundaries of spiritual warfare:

1) **Make sure that you understand the mission.**

(In this case the mission is to make the Land a place where God could dwell because all unclean/unholy elements had been removed)

Spiritual warfare starts off from the place where **all personal sin** has been dealt with and where now the focus moves to dealing with **all generational curses/woundings and emotional hurts** arising from this. Only once the soldier is fully restored, trained, and has declared themselves that they are not afraid of battle, should they move into war against powers and principality’s over territorial areas /countries/nations. The mission remains – remove all pagan activity/occult, and so forth.

2) **Plan to exploit the weak spots / target the position that will cause the quickest victory!!**
Every single battle will be different. The Book of Joshua not only describes the entry into that land and tells us of the overall victory, but very specifically shows us that each and every battle is unique\(^1\).

Here are just a few examples:

(a) **Jericho**: only at God’s Command, and only in line with His specifications

(b) **Ai**: by frontal and rear attacks, with reinforcements hidden way, and a false retreat in order to draw the enemy out into the open---you don’t just barge in every time

(c) **The five kings**: a hard march in the middle of the night, and a surprise attack at dawn with the sun at our backs and in the eyes of our enemy.

(d) **Tel Hazor**: a hard march and a full on charge up the Tel and into the City, and then to make sure that nobody forgets, you will burn everything to the ground…

**NUGGET!** Push through to the end - do not stop after the first victory.

3) **Minimize the effect of counter attack**.

Do not expose yourself to unnecessary risk. Do not use most force that is required.

Joshua had about 600,000 fighting fit men. Yet when he went into battle he only took about 40,000. He always had spare capacity.

**Question**:
How can we justify the number of small groups of believers that wander around and take on whatever they feel they would like too.

4) **Maintain the morale of the people under you**.

Joshua is able to run a campaign that stretched over months—from one end of the country to another. The army stays focused and happy if they are on the winning side.

The battle is a life long event—do not try to win the war in the first battle.

\(^1\) Please see Fighting With Joshua For YOUR Promised Land [http://www.kanaanministries.org/downloads/?did=249](http://www.kanaanministries.org/downloads/?did=249)
5) **Optimize the use of all forces.**

Is it not strange that the Old Testament model of *tribal unity in warfare* is so clearly spelt out as the most critical measure of success, and yet today the Body of Messiah often advances on the enemy as a single grouping.

Paul tells us that we have each been given a unique blend of gifts, and that ALL of the gifts are needed corporately for the Body to be successful.

By its very nature, every grouping of people will reflect a particular blend of gifting.

It therefore means that we need to gather together with those groupings, which have the ‘other’ components, in order to be an army. (Prayer groups from different areas across the city should gather together to form an army to take the city.)

Let us look at the children of Israel, just before they enter the Land. Reuben and Gad want to stay outside of the land, in a place where without doubt, some degree of spiritual contamination will take place. Moses agrees - but he insists that they must still join the army and go with to war…

**NUGGET!** We need all of the parts of the Body, in unity, in formation.

E) **RETAIN THE VICTORY**

Often we get the army together, go to war, and together with God win the battle - such is the story of Jericho.

**A BIBLICAL TRUTH**

Unless we maintain the rulership over that aspect in our lives that determined the initial victory, we could find ourselves in a place where we lose ground.

While the Israelites held control over Jericho, they maintained control over Temple Mount and the Temple / Tabernacle.

Since they lost Jericho, they have never regained control of the Mountain of God.

**TRANSFORMING FROM THE PHYSICAL TO THE SPIRITUAL BATTLE.**

I have alluded to this already.
You may ask - what is my Land?
I will point you to the image of a Tabernacle made up of Living Stones.
So what is my Land?

It is a community of believers, who—

- Walk in love
- Walk in unity
- Walk in the light
- Walk in Wisdom
- Whose lifestyle reflects the marriage with a bride waiting for her bridegroom.

We are “given” the land in a promise BUT
We are to take possession of it through a walk of obedience

The warfare of Paul / Ephesians is one where you and I deal with the SEVEN giants that guard the Land. And it is only when we can say that we have taken this ground that we can truly be the Tabernacle.

In the table which follows:

(1) We show the spirit behind the physical giants,
(2) In parallel we show the equivalent spiritual attribute that we must master and
(3) We highlight the weapon of warfare that we need to take up.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHYSICAL</th>
<th>SPIRITUAL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1) Canaanites</strong></td>
<td>Meaning merchants who humiliate in finance</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2) Hittites</strong></td>
<td>Those who use terror /fear discouragement</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3) Hivites</strong></td>
<td>Meaning people who only want the good life / compromise</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4) Perizzites</strong></td>
<td>Meaning those who live as separated/unprotected lives</td>
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<td>PHYSICAL</td>
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<tr>
<td>5) Girgashites</td>
<td>Meaning to “go back”/earthy—backsliding and carnal spirits</td>
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<tr>
<td>6) Amorites</td>
<td>Meaning those who are arrogant/boastful</td>
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<tr>
<td>7) Jebusites</td>
<td>Meaning those who trample on people, who used power to defile</td>
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**A FINAL THOUGHT**

You will not find one ‘recipe’ on how to make a weapon in the Bible. You will, however, find a recipe on how to bake bread.

Make sure that you have the “Lechem / Bread” of Life inside of you before you go out to war.

**SHALOM**