

Deuteronomy chapter 20.

?? The need for an army chaplain to rouse the troops before going off to battle;

“And when you draw near to battle, the priest shall come forward and speak to the people, and shall say to them, ‘Hear, O Israel, you draw near this day to battle against your enemies: let not your heart faint; do not fear, or tremble, or be in dread of them; for the Lord your God is He that goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to give you the victory’”. (Deut 20²⁻⁴)

?? Exemptions from military service (Deut 20⁵⁻⁸).

?? Appointment of officers (Deut 20⁹)

?? Investment of hostile cities, the closest we get to a just war theory in the Old Testament;

“When you draw near to a city to fight against it, offer terms of peace to it. And if its answer to you is peace and it opens to you, then all the people who are found in it shall do forced labour, for you and shall serve you. But if it makes no peace with you, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it: and when the Lord your God gives it into your hand you shall put all its males to the sword, but the women and the little ones, the cattle, and everything else in the city, all its spoil, you shall take as booty for yourselves; and you shall enjoy the spoil of your enemies, which the Lord your God has given you’”. (Deut 20¹⁰⁻¹⁴)

St. Thomas Aquinas: The Summa
Theologica Part II
Question 40.

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?? Whether some kind of war is lawful?

“As Augustine says (Contra Faust. xxii, 70): "To take the sword is to arm oneself in order to take the life of anyone, without the command or permission of superior or lawful authority." On the other hand, to have recourse to the sword (as a private person) by the authority of the sovereign or judge, or (as a public person) through zeal for justice, and by the authority, so to speak, of God, is not to "take the sword," but to use it as commissioned by another, wherefore it does not deserve punishment”.

?? Whether it is lawful for clerics to fight?

?? Whether it is lawful to lay ambushes in war?

“The object of laying ambushes is in order to deceive the enemy. Now a man may be deceived by another's word or deed in two ways. First, through being told something false, or through the breaking of a promise, and this is always unlawful. No one ought to deceive the enemy in this way, for there are certain **"rights of war and covenants, which ought to be observed even among enemies"**, as Ambrose states (De Officiis i)”.

?? Whether it is lawful to fight on Holy days?

The Seven Principles of the Just War Theory.

- 1. Just Cause:** Force may be used only to correct a grave, public evil, i.e. aggression or massive violation of the basic human rights of the whole population.
- 2. Legitimate authority:** Only duly constituted public authorities may use deadly force or wage war.
- 3. Right Intentions:** Force may be used only in a truly just cause and only for that purpose.
- 4. Probability of success:** Arms must not be used in a futile cause or in a case where disproportionate measures are required to achieve success.
- 5. Last resort:** Force may be used only after all peaceful alternatives have been seriously tried and exhausted.
- 6. Proportionality:** The overall destruction expected from the use of force must be outweighed by the good to be achieved.
- 7. Non-combatant immunity:** Civilians may not be the object of direct attack, and military personnel must take due care to avoid and minimise indirect harm to civilians.

Biblical Texts in favour of a Just War.

Genesis 15¹⁸⁻²⁰ Melchizadech blesses Abraham when he returns from a victorious war against four kings.

Exodus – Judges God is in favour of war to fulfil the Abrahamic promises; God Himself is referred to as “a man of War” (Exod 15³ also c.f. I Sam 18¹⁷).

Deut 7⁹⁻¹¹

“. Know therefore that the Lord your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations,

10. and requites to their face those who hate him, by destroying them; he will not be slack with him who hates him, he will requite him to his face.

11. You shall therefore be careful to do the commandment, and the statutes, and the ordinances, which I command you this day

Deut 20 for legislation on war.

New Testament.

Matthew 8¹⁰ – Jesus praises a centurion

John 2¹⁵ – Jesus uses physical force

Acts 10² – Cornelius a centurion is called a devout and God fearing man

Hebrews 11³²⁻³⁴ praise warriors in the Old Testament

Church's position on War.

The Church has never condemned war; it has promoted peace and tried to lessen the evils of war. Church fathers and theologians have recognized that war is not necessarily sinful, the church itself has even promoted wars such as the crusades and approved of military orders.

Catholic Church and modern Warfare

Pope John XXIII's encyclical “**Pacem in Terris**”

“**Gaudium et Spes**”