PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

IN THE HEBREW BIBLE AND BIBLICAL ISRAEL

by

James Swanson

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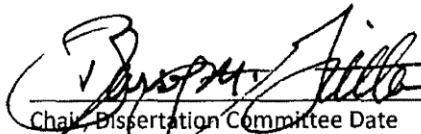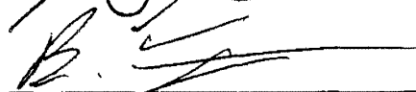Towson University
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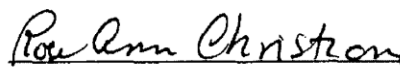**DISSERTATION APPROVAL PAGE**

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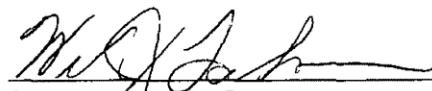
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Acknowledgements

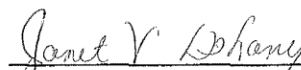I would like to thank my wife, Joan, and the rest of my family for allowing me the time and energy to complete this dissertation. I know that this dissertation took time away from them physically and emotionally for several months. Thank you for your graciousness and love for me.

I would like to thank those who led the development of the Baltimore Hebrew Institute at Towson University, formerly Baltimore Hebrew University, Baltimore, MD. I began attending Baltimore Hebrew in the early 1990s and was in the midst of PH. D. work when Baltimore Hebrew was subsumed by Towson University. The transition from Baltimore Hebrew University to Baltimore Hebrew Institute was sad and exhilarating for me. Sad because I missed the little building on Park Heights Ave. and the cloistered feeling it provided; exhilarating because there were now more resources and opportunities available to us as students.

I would also like to thank the readers who offered their suggestions for the betterment of this dissertation – Drs. Barry Freundel, Rose Ann Christian, Allaire Stallsmith and William Lahneman.

Lastly, I thank Dr. Barry Gittlen for over 20 years of instruction and guidance. I especially thank him for the countless hours he pored over this dissertation, correcting passive language, challenging my assumptions and advancing me as a student and a scholar.

Abstract
PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

IN THE HEBREW BIBLE AND BIBLICAL ISRAEL

James Swanson

This dissertation establishes the typology, prevalence and importance of psychological warfare according to the Hebrew Bible. It answers these questions – 'Does the Hebrew Bible portray ancient Israel employing psychological warfare?' And if so, 'How is ancient Israel portrayed implementing psychological warfare?' In answering these questions I provide a clear and comprehensive definition and typology of psychological warfare, based on Hebrew Bible usage. Then I demonstrate its importance to the military and political success of Biblical Israel as portrayed in the Hebrew Bible.

The types of psychological warfare portrayed were propaganda – including diplomacy, threats and taunts and advance word; physical intimidation – including terrorism, humiliation of political or military leaders, shaming, and displays or arrays; rallying the troops through words or actions; and divine intervention in each of these types of psychological warfare.

Each of these types of psychological warfare are clearly defined; then explored in ancient Near Eastern literature outside of the Hebrew Bible; and then finally examined in the Hebrew Bible.

Table of Contents

Abbreviations

Society of Biblical Literature abbreviations for Hebrew Bible book names (Patrick 73).

Gen - Genesis
Exod - Exodus
Lev - Leviticus
Num - Numbers
Deut - Deuteronomy
Josh - Joshua
Judg - Judges
Ruth - Ruth
1–2 Sam -1–2 Samuel
1–2 Kgs - 1–2 Kings
1–2 Chr - 1–2 Chronicles
Jonah -Jonah
Mic - Micah
Ezra - Ezra
Neh - Nehemiah
Esth - Esther
Job - Job
Ps/Pss - Psalms
Prov - Proverbs
Eccl (or Qoh) - Ecclesiastes (or Qoheleth)
Song - Song of Songs (Song of Solomon)
Isa - Isaiah
Jer - Jeremiah
Lam - Lamentations
Ezek - Ezekiel
Dan - Daniel
Hos - Hosea
Joel - Joel
Amos - Amos
Obad - Obadiah
Nah - Nahum
Hab - Habakkuk
Zeph - Zephaniah
Hag - Haggai
Zech - Zechariah
Mal - Malachi

Other abbreviations used in this dissertation

AEL	*Ancient Egyptian Literature I-II,* Miriam Lichtheim.
ANET	*Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, J. B. Pritchard
ARM	*Archives Royales de Mari*
COS	*Context of Scripture*, William Hallo
JAOS	*Journal of American Oriental Society*,
KRI	*Ramesside Inscriptions I-VIII*, K. A. Kitchen,
KUB	*Keilschrifturkunden aus Boghaz-koi*, I-LX
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
SBL	*Society for Biblical Literature*

I.
INTRODUCTION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE DEFINED

1. An introduction to the problem

Warfare was a normal part of the ancient world, and nations expended a tremendous amount of energy toward the defense of their homeland. The homeland was protected by building fortresses and walls, developing an army (standing and/or reserve), and supplying that army with weapons, food, housing and wages. The leaders of these nations also obtained safety by establishing parity treaties or vassal relationships with the nations around them.

Most nations also went through periods of expansion where they attacked the nations around them in an attempt to gain territory. This also required resources and resolve because the nation had to extend beyond its normal limits economically and militarily.

The Hebrew Bible depicts many examples of ancient Israel's involvement in warfare. Because major land trade routes between Egypt and countries in northern regions (Syria, Mesopotamia and Anatolia) ran through or near Israel the Israelites had to be prepared to fight defensive battles against nations trying to encroach upon their land, and, at times, they waged wars of expansion as well. The idea of war was so pervasive that Numbers 1 and 2 describe numbering the Israelites by tribe in preparation for entering Canaan, counting all the males who were twenty years or older - "whoever was able to go out to war" (Numbers 1:20 ff.). The author indicates that fitness for battle was what made someone count.

This dissertation contends that warfare, defensive warfare in particular, was one of the most significant responsibilities of any nation in the ancient Near East and that psychological warfare was one of the most important, if not the most important, military tactic used. Nearly every confrontation involved some psychological aspect that typically brought about a turning point, or the avoidance of physical conflict altogether.

This dissertation establishes the typology, prevalence and importance of psychological warfare according to the Hebrew Bible. I expect to find psychological warfare so deeply ingrained into the military mindset of Biblical Israel and the ancient Near East that it affected nearly every aspect of military affairs - weaponry; troop arrangement; clothing and armor; communications (propaganda) to enemy towns, enemy troops and national troops; battle strategies; and military tactics. I also expect to find that a nation's god was given credit for acts of psychological warfare.

This dissertation answers the questions – 'Does the Hebrew Bible portray ancient Israel employing psychological warfare?' And if so, 'How is ancient Israel portrayed implementing psychological warfare?' In answering these questions I will provide a clear and comprehensive definition and typology of psychological warfare based on Hebrew Bible usage.

History of previous scholarship related to this issue

Little research has specifically focused on Israelite psychological warfare. Numerous books, dissertations and articles addressing the broader topic of warfare in Biblical Israel and the ancient Near East and discussing issues relating to psychological warfare in general can be found. Many of these works make passing reference to some aspect of psychological warfare as they develop their own topic. Other secondary

sources include books and articles, including Rabbinic and early Christian writings, devoted to specific Biblical narratives which provide examples of psychological warfare, but I have been unable to locate any articles or books that directly address this topic.

Books that particularly benefitted this dissertation include: *Protest or Propaganda: War in the Old Testament Book of Kings and in Contemporaneous Ancient Near Eastern Texts* by Aarnoud van der Deijl; *Battles of the Bible by* Chaim Herzog and Mordechai Gichon*; A Time for War: A Study of Warfare in the Old Testament* by T. R. Hobbs; *The Military History of Ancient Israel* by Richard Gabriel; *War in the Hebrew Bible* by Susan Niditch; *The Context of Scripture* by William Hallo; and *Ancient Conquest Accounts* by Lawson K. Younger Jr. While concerned with broader issues of warfare each of these books touches upon Biblical narratives or issues directly related to psychological warfare in Biblical Israel.

Dissertations that focus upon some aspect of psychological warfare in the ancient Near East that proved useful in this dissertation include: *A Study of the Neo-Assyrian Intelligence Services and their Significance for 2 Kings 18—19* by Peter Dubovsky; *The Biblical Experience of Shame/Shaming: The Social Experience of Shame/Shaming in Biblical Israel in Relation to its use as a Religious Metaphor* by Lyn Bechtel Huber; and *The Practice of Ancient Near Eastern Warfare with Comparison to the Biblical Accounts of Warfare from the Conquest to the End of the United Monarchy* by Boyd Seevers. Dubovsky's analysis of the Assyrian use of psychological warfare, Huber's presentation of the military uses of shaming, and Seevers' comparative study of aspects of ancient Near Eastern warfare, including some elements of psychological warfare, proved both stimulating and insightful.

Articles making particular contributions to the dissertation research include: *The Just War in Ancient Israel* by Robert M. Good; *The Idea of Holy War in Ancient Israel* by Michael Walzer; *Shame and Mutilation of Enemies in the Hebrew Bible* by T. M. Lemos; and *Organs of Statecraft in the Israelite Monarchy* by Abraham Malamat. Good and Walzer's articles focus on the ethics and theology behind warfare in Biblical Israel which were used to motivate Israelite troops, Lemos shares insights into military shaming, and Malamat explores the use of treaties and propaganda to preclude or conclude warfare.

2. Methodology to be used

I approach this topic first by establishing a working definition of psychological warfare. Then I examine how other nations in the ancient Near East used psychological warfare. Following that analysis I consider how Biblical Israel employed psychological warfare through propaganda, physical intimidation, and rallying the troops. Then I explain the role that Israel's god, YHWH, played in psychological warfare. Each of these concepts are defined and illustrated below, in this introduction.

Since this dissertation focuses primarily upon events recorded in the Hebrew Bible it is important to understand current theories about the historicity of the Hebrew Bible. In the late 19th century Julius Wellhausen's Documentary Hypothesis concerning the Pentateuch explained how the extant text may have developed through the layered work of writers/redactors he labeled Jahwist, Elohist, Priestly and Deuteronomic (Coogan 49). In 1943 Martin Noth theorized that an exilic author wrote a Deuteronomistic History, now found in Deuteronomy-2 Kings, using some ancient materials as his basis (O'Brien 3-4). These theories have sparked many theoretical offshoots as scholars attempted to examine the Biblical text through the lens of modern literary criticism.

Currently there are two broad schools of thought about the historicity of the Hebrew Bible. The maximalist approach which purports that there are core parts of the Hebrew Bible which may even pre-date the Monarchial period, and that the Hebrew Bible has historical significance. Minimalist scholars contend that most, if not all, of the Hebrew Bible was composed in the exilic period, or later, and that it is of little historical value. They see the Biblical stories as late polemics written to explain why Israel was exiled.

As with any discussion or debate there are extremes on either end. William Dever exposed the minimalist extreme when he noted that Philip R. Davies finally concluded in his *In Search of "Ancient Israel"* that there was no ancient Israel (Dever 2002, 14). Later, Dever referred to Davies' theories as 'nihilism' (Dever 2002, 14 and Dever 2001, 5). Others who have contributed to this extreme minimalist vein are Thomas Thompson and Niels Peter Lemche.[1]

On the other end of the spectrum is extreme maximalism which is probably best identified with the "Biblical archaeology" of G. E. Wright and W. F. Albright. These 'Biblical historians' sought to prove the historicity and divine inspiration of the Hebrew Bible by matching archaeological finds to Biblical events.[2] Both extremes approach the Biblical text with preconceived notions which affect their view of textual data and archaeological data.

There is a theoretical middle ground and Dever stated the core tenets which have become the norm to many Biblical scholars today, "the textual data in the Hebrew Bible

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[1] See Dever 2001 pp. 1-52 and Kitchen 2003 pp. 449-500 for in depth discussions about these and other minimalist thinkers.

[2] See Thompson pp. 326-330 for a brief overview of maximalism.

do give us reliable portraits of some aspects of Israelite religion--mostly when we 'read between the lines' of the polemics against the popular cults that were tolerated earlier but became anathema to the later editors. By and large, however, the texts of the Hebrew Bible in its present form tend to be: (1) late; (2) highly selective and heavily edited; (3) elitist and idealistic; (4) concerned largely with theocratic ideology; and (5) static in their final edited form, with no more such texts to be expected" (Dever 2002, 25-26).   As part of this theoretical middle ground Dever wrote about accepting both the convergences and divergences of textual and archaeological data (Dever 2001, 271).

The objective of this dissertation is to establish and elucidate the presence of psychological warfare in the Hebrew Bible. Consequently, I have chosen to focus upon the Biblical narratives, and other ancient Near Eastern texts, as they are presented rather than attempting to prove or disprove any historicity theory. Lawson Younger agrees with this approach, "Thus the dilemma of whether and to what extent the events of a text correspond to the 'truth' (i.e. the question of the veracity or reliability of the text) can be put aside (at least temporarily) in order to shift one's attention to the texts themselves" (Younger 1990, 56).

I have developed a typology of psychological warfare in the Hebrew Bible which rests in part upon the following questions:

- *Does this narrative depict an active instance of psychological warfare - or a prophecy or historical reference about psychological warfare?* The Bible contains many instances of rhetoric surrounding an act of psychological warfare. For instance, in Psalms and the prophets the authors refer to acts of psychological warfare either historically or prophetically, these passages are related to the idea

of psychological warfare but not the instances themselves. I omitted them from the main database but will use them as supportive material in some instances, and they are listed in Appendix B on page 196.

- *Does this narrative depict more than one element of psychological warfare?* It became obvious that there was more than one kind of psychological warfare happening in some of the narratives, so I included such passages in more than one category. I have charted both the number of passages which contain psychological warfare and the separate instances of psychological warfare contained in those passages.

- *Was the act of psychological warfare performed by YHWH or humans?* The authors attributed many acts of psychological warfare to YHWH and I categorized them as "Divine Intervention".

3. Psychological warfare defined

Before progressing further we need to define what term psychological warfare means in this dissertation. Although psychological warfare has been used by armies for centuries, the term 'psychological warfare' was believed to be first used by British historian J. F. C. Fuller in 1920, when he wrote that traditional warfare might be:

> replaced by a purely psychological warfare, wherein weapons are not used or battlefields sought . . . but [rather] . . . the corruption of the human reason, the dimming of human intellect, and disintegration of the moral and spiritual life of one nation by the influence of the will of another is accomplished (qtd. in McLaurin, 257).

There is not one clear definition of this term because it has gathered additional significance as it has been applied to various aspects of military endeavor. The goal was usually to avoid physical combat by intimidation, negotiation, humiliation, subjugation,

etc., or to gain an advantage in the event of classic hand-to-hand battle. Harold Lasswell said, "The basic idea is that the best success in war is achieved by the destruction of the enemy's will to resist, and with a minimum annihilation of fighting capacity" (Lasswell in Daugherty, 22).

As a foundation for this paper I will use a basic definition taken from *A Psychological Warfare Casebook*:

> psychological warfare may be defined as the planned use of propaganda and other actions designed to influence the opinions, emotions, attitudes, and behavior of enemy, neutral, and friendly foreign groups in such a way as to support the accomplishment of national aims and objectives. (Daugherty 2)

This definition shows the breadth of understanding involved in defining this term. It includes any action which gives an advantage to one of the combatants in a battle. Daugherty goes on to say, "It is the contention of the editors that for any act to be described as falling within the purview of psychological warfare the action undertaken should have been planned and not the result of some accidental occurrence" (Daugherty 2). This statement will have great significance when we discuss YHWH's role in warfare because the Biblical authors chose to attribute storms and other natural occurrences to YHWH. They also attributed unexpected reactions and retreats to YHWH. Therefore what could have been viewed as an accidental occurrence in some eyes became a divine act of psychological warfare in the Biblical account.

The idea of using psychological warfare did not originate with the Israelites. Most other warring cultures used these techniques to varying degrees. In the next chapter we will look at examples of psychological warfare in the ancient Near East outside of Israel. In the *Book of War,* Sun Tzu wrote about psychological warfare through noise, visual displays and surprise.

Lasswell wrote[3] that, "The *Book of War* also advised the assassination of enemy leaders in order to create panic" (Lasswell in Daugherty 22). Lasswell noted the description of psychological warfare which was used to both demoralize the enemy troops and buoy the expectations of the national troops in the *Arthashastra*, a 4th century BCE Indian text.[4]

There are many ideas about what actions should be covered in the definition of psychological warfare. Roland Perusse listed terms which could be synonymous with psychological warfare such as cold war, war of ideas, struggle for the minds and wills of men, war for the minds of men, thought war, ideological warfare, nerve warfare, political warfare, international information, overseas information, campaign of truth, propaganda, international propaganda, propaganda warfare, war of words, indirect aggression, agitation, and international communication (Perusse in Daugherty, 25-26).

A United States Air Force manual listed several psychological warfare tactics including show of force, attack on a selected target to demonstrate the futility of further resistance, harassing actions to limit enemy effectiveness, demonstrating military superiority, and the use of propaganda materials written and verbal (McLaurin, 261).

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[3] Lasswell stated, "Psychological Warfare is a recent name for an old idea about how to wage successful war. The idea is found in the oldest manuals of military strategy. Sun Tzu's *The Book of War*, written in China in the fifth century B.C., stressed the importance of destroying the enemy's will to fight through such means as surprise and noise. 'In night fighting,' Sun Tzu wrote, 'beacons and drums are largely used; in day fighting, a great number of banners and flags, and the enemies eyes and ears are confounded'" (Lasswell in Daugherty 21).

[4] Lasswell stated, "The East Indian political classic, Kautilya's *Arthasastra,* for example, contains advice on how to destroy enemy morale and build up one's own. Secret agents, it suggests, should circulate among the enemy soldiers and spread rumors of their certain defeat. As for one's own forces, 'Astrologers and other followers of the king should infuse spirit into the army by pointing out [its] impregnable nature'" (Lasswell in Daugherty 22).

These lists show that psychological warfare is a complex mixture of actions and words, which can be aimed at enemies, allies or the national population and troops. The core thought to remember is that one side is trying to gain advantage on another side by whatever means necessary short of classic hand-to-hand war.

The psychological aspect of war might have more value than the physical. At the very heart of psychological warfare is affecting the motivation, confidence, hopes and expectations of enemy and national troops which affects their decision-making and their intensity in battle:

> Some of the truly greats went on to prove that war is as much a psychological as a physical matter. In most of the immortal victories of antiquity, the actual fighting took on almost a secondary importance. "For the profound truth of war is that the issue of battles is usually decided in the minds of the opposing commanders, not in the bodies of their men." (Durschmied 13)

4. Direction and definitions

I have used the definitions below to decide when psychological warfare was present in an ancient text. These definitions were foundational in the formulation of my typology of psychological warfare.

Propaganda - The use of words to try to sway the enemy. Diplomacy should be considered propaganda since it involves trying to win an enemy over without a battle -- but the prospect of a battle looms if the enemy does not agree to the treaty. Direct threats are included in this category such threats being the most obvious way of trying to sway the enemy with words. Advance word of the power or magnitude of an army is also propaganda. The supposition is that a force could spread advance word of troop size, victories or capabilities that would filter back to, and negatively affect their enemies.

Physical Intimidation - An army's physical attempt to break the morale of an opposing force. These physical acts could be directed against opposing rulers or officials, against innocent people as a warning, or against enemy combatants. Physical intimidation assumes that more has happened than typical battle techniques. Acts of this nature could include public display of dead persons, humiliation through dismemberment, torture, nakedness, selective killing, etc. Physical intimidation was especially used against the leader of an army or a nation to send a message to the rest of the forces, and to that nation as a whole. Sometimes forces tried to intimidate each other by the show of force, or displaying sacred objects, colors or banners. I divided physical intimidation into the following subcategories: humiliation of a leader, shaming, troop array, and terrorism - harming some to send a message to many.

Rallying the Troops - Acts aimed at the national troops rather than the opposing force and intended to give the army courage and confidence. Some acts or words were intended to both demoralize the enemy and lift the spirits of the national troops. This rallying was done by the king, by an army official, or by a god. Rallying included positive and affirming remarks about their skills, or about the inferiority of the opponent, or about how their god would help them. Sometimes the words used were negative and meant to induce fear and earnestness in the national troops. This negative psychological warfare was used particularly in regard to YHWH's desire for Israel and her soldiers to remain faithful to the law in or out of battle. I divided the instances of rallying the troops into either words or actions.

Divine Intervention – A Biblical author's assertion that YHWH affected either enemy or Israelite troops physically or psychologically changing the outcome of a battle.

Sometimes YHWH is portrayed as affecting his own troops positively by assuring them that he would support them in their battle. In most of the instances of divine intervention, YHWH assisted Israel's army in winning a battle while the army actually did the fighting, but periodically YHWH just defeated an enemy while Israel watched. I examined the instances of divine intervention where YHWH promised to help Israel win a battle, the times that YHWH inspired fear or confusion in an army, the times that YHWH used physical means to affect an army and when YHWH defeated an enemy without the participation of the Israelites.

5. Statistical analysis of psychological warfare in the Hebrew Bible

My psychological warfare typology enabled me to analyze Biblical passages critically and categorize each instance of psychological warfare as propaganda, physical intimidation, rallying the troops or divine intervention. As one would expect most instances of psychological warfare occurred in the narrative books of the Hebrew Bible - Genesis, Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 2 Chronicles.[5] There were 155 passages in the Hebrew Bible which depicted 190 instances of psychological warfare - 36 of these passages depicted 38 instances of propaganda, 30 passages showed 35 instances of physical intimidation, 46 passages related 55 instances of rallying the troops, and 43 passages depicted 62 instances of divine intervention.

The prevalence of instances of rallying the troops reiterated how important it was to prepare the national troops for battle, to keep them inspired, and give them a sense of worth and value when the battle is completed. Rallying the troops was done equally

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[5] See Appendix A, page 189, for a comprehensive listing of all instances of psychological warfare and their typology.

through words and actions (see *Chart A* below). Biblical passages show that words were not enough to inspire troops to do their very best; they were inspired by the presence of religious acts and symbols, and by the active involvement of their leaders in the preparations and actions of war.

The high number of divine interventions showed that the Biblical authors believed that YHWH played a major role in the warring process. Divine intervention was predominantly in the form of assurances of divine help. These assurances were delivered through prophets and through acts of divination. Typically they were delivered to a king or military leader to give them courage as they prepared for themselves and others for battle. The second most common instance of divine intervention was when YHWH inspired fear and/or confusion in the enemy troops. Typically there was no physical explanation for why this happened. The opposing troops just became overwhelmed by hopelessness and dread.

The most common form of propaganda was the issuing of threats against another force. This most basic form of psychological warfare was an attempt to avoid physical confrontation altogether. The goal was to test the mettle of the commander of the opposing force, perhaps they would fold and then there could be a vassal treaty between the two forces (the second most common form of propaganda). If the threats were not heeded then it was common for barbs to be thrown back and forth as the two forces justified their reasons for the impending battle.

Physical intimidation is the most blatant, but least used, type of psychological warfare in the Hebrew Bible. Most commonly these acts were designed to humiliate a military commander or political leader of the opposing force so their army would become

fearful and weak, or give up altogether. The idea was that a force was only as strong as its leader and if that leader was debilitated, feminized or destroyed the army would falter. The second most common form of physical intimidation was the way in which armies displayed or arrayed themselves. Armies tried to give the impression that they were more numerous, more motivated, more devoted to their god and more technologically advanced than the opposing force. They accomplished this through the display of banners, sacred symbols, troop formations and sometimes through ruses.

Before examining the instances of psychological warfare in the Hebrew Bible we will apply this typology of psychological warfare to accounts of hostilities described in other ancient Near Eastern texts. This examination of ancient Near Eastern texts will help validate the typology by establishing that these methods of psychological warfare were also employed in contexts outside of the purview Hebrew Bible.

A Summary of Biblical Instances of Psychological Warfare

Chart A.	Passages	Instances
PROPAGANDA	36	38
Diplomacy		12
Advance Word		10
Threats		16
PHYSICAL INTIMIDATION	30	35
Humiliate the Leader		13
Shaming		5
Troop Array		10
Terrorism		7
RALLYING THE TROOPS	46	55
Actions		26
Words		29
DIVINE INTERVENTION	43	62
YHWH rallies the troops		27
YHWH fights psychologically		19
YHWH fights physically		8
YHWH wins the battle		8
PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE	155	190

II.
PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE PRACTICED IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

OUTSIDE OF ISRAEL

1. Introduction

Warfare in the ancient Near East involved both physical and psychological tactics.

In this chapter I have reviewed relevant ancient Near Eastern texts in light of my

typology of psychological warfare to ascertain how psychological warfare was used in

the ancient Near East outside of the land of Israel. These Bronze and Iron Age texts

reflect a broad spectrum of ancient Near Eastern societies.

The chronicles, annals and inscriptions of ancient Near Eastern kings contain

accounts of their military exploits, both real and imagined. These accounts were

perceived to have value when they were created and have been invaluable to modern

historians piecing together ancient history.[6] These ancient records of interactions

between nations and peoples offer glimpses into the minds of rulers and the psyche of

their nations.

> The power of the king may have been absolute, but it was not self-evident and the
> king had to prove his legitimacy. And seeing as that divine election was tied into
> military success so tightly, the successful war was the most unambiguous
> confirmation of the king's legitimacy. The shadow side of this story was that the
> defeat, especially, was very threatening to the position of the king. This is why he
> spent such a great deal of energy into turning around failures into seeming success
> stories. According to Laato, he disposed of four methods to do so: leaving out
> facts, combining two facts while suggesting they correspond to each other (a--

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[6] "Military activity is one of the ways in which political bodies typically relate to
each other. Much of our historical information refers to wars and related events
(including an outcome terminating in the surrender of one of the parties, or in peace
between them). Since historiography – ancient and modern alike – focuses mainly upon
this subject, it is therefore natural that details about wars, their courses and consequences
have become milestones in historical surveys, including those on the Ancient Near East"
(Eph'al 1984, 89).

lost--battle with the--natural--death of the opponent after a short period of time), the blowing up of results without mentioning them concretely and depicting an opponent extra negatively. (Deijl 419)

Each ruler believed that it was beneficial to him, his nation and their god to be remembered in a favorable light,[7] but that does not mean that all texts were propagandistic. Deijl delineated between the purpose of annals and chronicles.

> The most important difference between both genres is their function. Annals served a purely propagandistic tool, as we saw before . . . spreading the royal ideology. This is not true for the chronicles. They were not written at the court; rather, they were probably composed from the archives of private writers. Grayson noted 'There is no clear propagandistic flavour to the chronicles. Unlike the Assyrian scribes the Babylonians neither fail to mention Babylonian defeats nor do they attempt to change them into victories . . . can we then conclude that these documents are the product of a sincere desire to keep a brief and accurate record of Babylonian history for its own sake? It is at least possible.' (Deijl 610)

This dissertation examines texts, Biblical and, in this chapter, extra-Biblical for instances of psychological warfare. I have taken these ancient Near Eastern texts at face

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[7] Deijl was referring to Sennacherib's annals when he wrote, "It may go too far to state that the goal of the annals was propagandistic. After all, the Assyrian population was largely analphabetic and moreover, a large part of the texts had been engraved in clay in the foundation of a palace or a temple. While nowadays the accessibility of the Akkadian texts can be a problem at times, it was not always that much better in the days of old! Yet it is easier to defend the statement that these texts form, as it were, the 'articulation' of a way of thinking by the Assyrian kings that was aimed at propaganda. Oppenheim points out that the Assyrian kings had various forms of communication with enemies and subjects: monuments, palaces, fortresses, steles, and rituals. The war was even a form of 'sign-producing, that is symbolic communication'. The horrors of war had no other goal than taking away any desire that any possible enemy might have to express their opposition. The message of the remarkably explicit reliefs in the entrance hall of the palace was carried to the other peoples via ambassadors and other travellers. The stela, even though it had been written in Assyrian and although it stood in the midst of an Aramaic-speaking and mostly analphabetic population--could only be interpreted in on manner, like a flag planted on strange soil. The prisms and the other texts, which were kept in the foundation of the building, could only be read by the gods and by successors. Nonetheless, they fit within the manner of thinking that propaganda is important" (Deijl 397-398).

value, as I have done with the Biblical text in ensuing chapters. The analysis below

follows my psychological warfare typology described in the opening chapter.

2. Propaganda

Propaganda was used throughout the ancient Near East to try to break down the

will of opposing forces. The ultimate goal of propaganda was to avoid conventional

warfare if possible. The first step toward resolution of a conflict was diplomacy.

Diplomacy

Often diplomacy preceded or precluded physical conflict. The bureaucrats of

each nation tried to gain a psychological advantage, or avoid physical confrontation

altogether. "Actual war seems to have been a last resort, even for the Assyrians, who

attempted to persuade enemies to submit willingly" (Bienkowski 316). One or both of

the forces would brag about their great accomplishments, their gods and their superior

army. They would offer a treaty with terms that involved payment of tribute and other

belittling conditions. Sometimes a nation would recognize that it was totally

overmatched and accept the vassal status without struggle. When diplomacy worked,

each side felt that, in a sense, they had won. The superior party now had resources and

prestige; the vassal party had a protector and they avoided massive loss of life and

perhaps complete annihilation.

One example of this type of diplomacy was found in the *Ten Year Annals of*

Mursili [8] (a Hittite ruler).

> [Manapa-Datta] was afraid, and did not come forth to meet me. He sent forth his
> mother, the old men, (and) the old women to meet me. They came to me. They
> bowed down at (my) feet. Now because women bowed at my feet I gave to the

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[8] Ten Year Annals of Mursili , KBo III 4 Rs III.10-22.

women as they wished. And so I did not go into the Seha River(-land). The fugitives of Hattusa, who were in the Seha River(-land), they handed over to me (freely). The fugitives which they handed over to me were 4,000 people. And I sent them forth to Hattusa. And they brought them forth. But Manapa-Datta and the land of Seha River I took into servitude. (Younger 1990, 202)

Younger commented, "This is a ruse of the rank of the Gibeonites. By craftiness Manapa-Datta saved his country from sure destruction" (Younger 1990, 203).[9]

Another instance of submission was found on Ramses III's text of the fifth year[10] at Medinet Habu which related a victory over Libyans. The Libyans subjugated themselves to the pharaoh by saying ". . . your terror seizes them, cowed, miserable and straying. They all make a brt (a treaty), bringing their tribute [on their backs . . ., and coming with prai]se to adore [him=the king]"[11] (Younger 1990, 204).

In a final example Younger sums up an interaction between Assurbanipal and a vassal king taken from Assurbanipal's *Prism A*[12]:

> [Gyges, king of Lydia] had seen in a dream the nibit sumi, i.e., 'the written name' of Assurbanipal and had heard a voice ordering him to subject himself to Assyria in order to defeat those who were threatening his country. The god Assur himself had revealed this formula for overcoming the Cimmerians. Thus Gyges desired a vassal relationship to Assurbanipal. As a result of this dream, Assurbanipal agreed to accept Lydia into the Assyrian fold. Awe-struck by the dream, Gyges undertook a yearly tribute to Assyria. However, he did not remain a loyal vassal. (Younger 1990, 201) He continues, "One might suggest that the dream itself was a type of ruse to gain support from the Assyrian monarch" (Younger 1990, 202).

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[9] The Gibeonites presented themselves to Joshua as travelers from a distant land so that he would make a treaty with them. See page 65 of this dissertation for further treatment of the Gibeonite deception.

[10] KRI V, pp. 58-66.

[11] Kitchen, 'Egypt, Ugarit, Qatna and Covenant', UF 11 (1979).

[12] Assurbanipal - Prism A: II.111-125.

Diplomatic measures did not preclude threatening rhetoric. Dubovsky wrote about the Assyrian king Sargon II, and his carrot-and-stick psychological warfare strategies with potential allies:

> One of the tools the Assyrians used to recruit their allies was "encouraging" them and "speaking kindly with" their tribal representatives. . . . The recruiting speech was based on the alternating "bad guy/good guy" strategy. Alternation of severe psychological pressure (bad guy) with a kind, considerate and forbearing speech full of promises (good guy) loosened enemy resistance and facilitated the alliance with the Assyrians. According to the NA [Neo-Assyrian] archives, such rhetoric was carried out on several levels: by local propagandists addressing their kinsmen; by Assyrian officials dealing with representatives of the tribes; and by the king himself, talking to tribal envoys during the audience that he generously granted them. At all three levels, the goal of the "good guy" strategy was to "make them trust" so that they, in their turn, would spread the word about Assyrian kindness." (Dubovsky 206-207)

In this next section we will find that when diplomacy failed threats and taunts followed. The next step toward conventional battle was a war of words with each side making greater and greater boasts until one side submitted or they were irretrievably drawn into battle with each other.

Threats and taunts

Threats upped the intensity of a brewing conflict and although the goal was still to avoid battle both sides knew that the next step was conventional battle. Threats could not be made idly or surrounding nations would not respect them. "[Quincy] Wright shows that the goal in taunting is, in fact, to preserve prestige and avoid physical combat; the taunt is often accompanied by bluffing, counter-taunting, and more bluffing" *[brackets mine]* (Niditch 92). Niditch continued, "A taunt is a challenge, a dare that cannot be ignored unless the object of the challenge and implicit insult wishes to admit cowardice, womanishness, and defeat. To meet the challenge and remove the taunt is to obtain status and glory" (Niditch 93).

Threats were intended to communicate a sense of inevitability; if the threatened

party did not acquiesce to the demands of the threatener then the horrors described in the

threats would certainly ensue. "The Assyrians also quickly learned the value of

propaganda in preventing rebellion within their empire and in encouraging hostile tribes

or kingdoms to surrender. Thus, the Assyrian army and society tried to present

themselves as both irresistible and terrible" (Archer 24). Archer's characterization of

Assyria as "both irrestistable and terrible" illustrates the sense of hopelessness the

Assyrians attempted to instill in their foes.[13]

During periods of transition from one ruler to the next it was common for vassal

states to test the mettle of the new ruler by ceasing to pay tribute, or for surrounding

nations to attempt to annex territory. Rowlett cites one such example: "At the beginning

of the Ten Year Annals of Mursili II, a new king had just suceeded [sic] his father as

ruler. Humiliated by neighboring enemies who thought him weak and who attempted to

take advantage of the turmoil of transition, he fought back. His foes encroached upon his

territorial holdings and taunted him, calling him a 'child'" (Rowlett 87).

Propaganda was not always shared directly with the opposing force. Sometimes

word was spread to combatants and non-combatants by scouts, spies and fifth columnists

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[13] See pages 27-32 of this dissertation for examples of Assyria's psychological warfare tactics.

"The Assyrians not only performed acts of terror they chronicled them in writ and in reliefs so that the memory of their cruelty would not quickly fade. The Assyrians were the first to practice psychological warfare on grand scale as a matter of state policy. Assyrian cruelty became legendary. What made the Assyrians different from other conquerors was that they boasted about their cruelty and raised monuments to it as a form of propaganda to convince actual and potential adversaries that resistance was futile and carried terrible penalties" (Gabriel 2005, 181).

(a person who was embedded in an opposing force and was paid to spread false rumors and misleading information to fellow soldiers), as we will find in the following discussion.

<u>Advance word</u>

One final form of propaganda was manipulating information going out to other nations, either inspiring a false sense of hope, or despair. "Tactics prior to full-scale battle included gathering intelligence and spreading misinformation using spies and infiltrators, night marches, surprise attacks and deceptive manoeuvres" (Bienkowski 316). Although Bienkowski was referring to the Hittite king Mursili II these types of tactics were common as is illustrated throughout this chapter.

Sasson added, "As part of an overall strategy, kings were engaged in subversive activities intended either to weaken the resistance of an enemy or to overthrow its leaders" (Sasson 40). Sasson shared that some examples of this kind of subterfuge were hiring fifth columnists, sending out propagandists and political assassinations[14] (ARM I:10:16-25) (Sasson 40-43).

This type of subterfuge developed as nations gathered information about each other and developed battle plans.[15] Scouts and spies became a very important part of battle preparations. Their information about the opposing force's size, position and armaments was very valuable. But, as has been noted earlier, sometimes these persons

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[14] ARM I:10:16-25.

[15] "Egyptians also used counter-intelligence and deception to gain maximum surprise. Prior to the final formulation of battle plans the Egyptians routinely used the commander's conference during which senior officers were urged to criticize the plan and give frank advice" (Gabriel 2005, 75).

shared information as well, facts or lies typically meant to frighten the enemy. After

hearing that a mighty force was coming, some nations submitted to avoid annihilation. In

the *Annals of Tiglath-Pileser I* [16] we find this record

> 4,000 Kasku (and) Urumu, insubmissive troops of Hatti-land--who had seized by
> force the cities of the land of Subartu which were vassals of Assur, my lord--
> heard of my coming to the land of Subartu. The splendor of my valor
> overwhelmed them. Fearing battle they seized my feet (submitted to me).
> Together with their property and 120 chariots (and) harnessed horses I took them;
> and I reckoned them as people of my land. (Younger 1990, 200)

Dubovky described how Sargon II used psychological warfare to attempt to turn

the people away from Merodach-Baladan the Babylonian king whom he was preparing to

attack.

> The success or failure of PsW [psychological warfare] depended largely on the
> field agents. They walked from town to town and from village to village arguing
> with residents, encouraging or intimidating the people to abandon Merodach-
> Baladan and to ally themselves with the Assyrians. . . . Judging from the
> available data, the field agents were not chosen randomly but had to conform to at
> least one of the following criteria: (a) the agent had to have sufficient experience
> in diplomatic services to conduct the mission . . .; (b) the agent had to be "one of
> them. Propaganda was better received if presented by a kinsman who spoke the
> language of the people, shared their culture, and believed in the same gods. Thus,
> an Aramean addressed the Arameans; a Chaldean addressed the Chaldeans; (c)
> The agent had to have Assyrian connections. The credibility of the message
> increased if it was presented by an official who not only gave promises but also
> had executive authority. (Dubovsky 208)

Rameses III's inscription[17] at Medinet Habu which describes the approach of the

Sea Peoples around 1200 BCE is another example of advance word.

> " … the foreign countries made a conspiracy in their lands. All at once the lands
> were removed and scattered in the fray. No land could stand before their arms,
> from Hatti, Kode, Carchemish, Arzawa, and Alashiya [Cyprus] on, being cut off

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[16] Annals of Tiglath-Pileser I, (II.100-II.6).

[17] Inscription on the second pylon at Medinet Habu, J.H. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt*, Part Four.

one at a time. A camp was set up in one place in Amor. They desolated its people, and its land was like that which has never come into being. They were coming forward toward Egypt, while the flame was prepared for them. Their confederation was the Philistines, Tjeker, Shekelesh, Denyen, and Wheshesh lands united. They laid their hands upon the lands as far as the circuit of the earth, their hearts confident and trusting: 'Our plans will succeed.'" (Yadin 1963, 249)

Rameses III repulsed the Sea Peoples and kept them from advancing into Egypt, and although his description of the Sea Peoples might have been self-aggrandizing, his statement reveals that the reputation of the Sea Peoples preceded them. One has to wonder if the impact the story of the coming Sea Peoples carried through spies and scouts melted the resolve of these nations.

When propaganda could not avert war, rival factions moved to the next step of physical intimidation. Physical intimidation sends a message to many people through an act performed for or to a few people.

2. Physical intimidation

Physical intimidation has a dual effect – disheartening the enemy and emboldening one's own troops. If physical intimidation can accomplish both of these goals then it is a very valuable tool in a military leader's arsenal. Physical intimidation was not perceived to be a moral or ethical choice, it was another battle tactic that could lead to less casualties if used effectively.[18]

> Anthropologist David Riches says that violent acts constitute a performance, and that violence itself has a symbolic as well as an instrumental function. . . . Furthermore, Riches goes on to say, the same act or image of violence will

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[18] "Little is said about the war explicitly. Implicitly, one gets the impression that Sennacherib regards the war as a political-legal instrument. All Sennacherib has to show if the effectiveness of his war craft. In other words: there is no moral valuation of the war, only an instrumental one. The legal framework of Sennacherib's actions demands that his acts of war contain a certain preventive component, as we have seen. In other words, examples have to be set now and again" (Deijl 418-419).

achieve more than one expressive purpose: the act or image offers to the perpetrator's own group a statement about his 'worth as a political associate', and to the rival group, a statement about his own group's political and social capabilities. (Rowlett 171)

The first kind of physical intimidation I have examined is terrorism. Terrorism might appear to be wanton violence - sadistic and amoral at first glance - yet can be a very effective psychological tool as mentioned above.

Terrorism

Terrorism involves harming people with the intent of sending a warning that further violence could follow if there is not submission.[19] The Assyrian army was known for its use of terroristic tactics to weaken their enemies' resolve, or to avoid conflict altogether. "Assyria had built and maintained its empire by military force and terror, showing no mercy to any defeated foe, whether in conquest or rebellion" (Davis 2). These methods included razing nearby villages as a warning to walled cities, various kinds of open display torture – for example impalement. On his stela found in Nimrud, Assurnasirpal II[20] described how he handled a revolt in his kingdom,

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[19] H.W.F. Saggs stated, "There are frequent references in the Assyrian annals to the pouring out upon the enemy of 'sahurratu', 'nammurratu', or 'hattu' by the Assyrian king, or the covering of the enemy land by 'hurbasu' or by the king's 'puluhtu', and I would maintain that this represented a definite conscious use by the Assyrians not of terrorism for sadistic purposes, but of psychological warfare … In the absence of mass media of communication, terror, spreading from village to village and town to town, was the only means of softening up an enemy population in advance" (Younger 1990, 66).

"Some of the atrocities perpetrated by the Assyrians also had a propaganda aspect; they were not simply acts of retribution, nor were they mere sadism" (Saggs 249).

Fuller writes about the Assyrians "But its main weapon was 'terror'. Cities were stormed, sacked and systematically demolished, and prisoners were often impaled or flayed alive" (Fuller 9).

[20] D. D. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylon*, vol. 1, pp. 138-145.

"I erected a pillar opposite his (Ahia-baba's) city gate, all the chiefs who had revolted I flayed, with their skins I covered the pillar, some in the midst I walled up, others on the pillar on stakes I impaled, still others I arranged around the pillar on stakes. Many within the borders I flayed, with their skins I covered the walls. As for the chieftains and royal officers who had rebelled, I cut off their members." (Archer 24)

Israel Eph'al noted that Ashurbanipal used raids to unsettle a population in advance of the larger army, "A limited but significant and, apparently planned, activity were raids in frontier regions which took place when the imperial army could not get there" (Eph'al 1984, 95). He continued, "Although the purpose of raids was not to assault the enemy's army, their moral and political influence was considerable" (ibid.).

Terror tactics were also used to maintain control of the lands the Assyrians conquered.

The Assyrian empire was no easy empire to govern. In an age of primitive communications the empire was widely scattered and in some places was geographically isolated by mountain ranges and deserts. It was, moreover, comprised of conquered peoples with strong nationalist feeling tied to local religious, tribal and blood loyalties. The Assyrians mastered the administration of this state through the use of a modern bureaucracy, the establishment of a provincial system of authority, the use of auxiliary armies, the creation of a policy of deportation (sometimes of whole peoples), and the ruthless use of police and military terror supported by an efficient intelligence system. (Gabriel 2005, 180)

Accounts of total annihilation tended to be overblown. In fact there are at least two separate accounts of Israel's total annihilation.[21] A conquered people were typically

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[21] "The Gebal Barkal Stela of Thutmose III [Helck, *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie*, vol. 17, pp. 1228-1243]: The great army of Mitanni, it is overthrown in the twinkling of an eye. It has perished completely, as thought they had never existed. Like the ashes (lit. 'the end') of a fire. The Merneptah 'Israel' Stela [KRI, IV, pp. 12-19]: Yanoam made nonexistent; Israel is wasted, his seed is not". The Mesa Inscription [M. Lidzbarski, *Handbuch der norsemitishcen Epigraphik*, plate I]: But I saw my desire over him and his house, and Israel has utterly perished forever (…) And I fought against the town and I took it. I killed all the inhabitants of the town, as an offering of propitiation to Kemos and Moab" [*brackets mine*] (Younger 1990, 227).

required to pay tribute to the victor so it was not beneficial to totally destroy a possible

source of income. Yet, since their goal was to utterly break the will of people who dared

to revolt, Assyrians also damaged agricultural prospects while putting down revolts. "It

was in the interests of the imperial army to break the rebel's power and morale quickly

and this demanded the operation of a great army, fighting intensively and simultaneously

over several cities. The army would ruin the economic potential of the rebellious country

by destroying unfortified settlements, cutting down plantations and devastating fields"

(Eph'al 1984, 97)

Military leaders knew that they stood to lose a large percentage of their fighting

force if they were defeated in battle. "Analyses of kill rates suffered in ancient battles by

the defeated compared with those suffered by the victor suggest that on average the

vanquished lost 37.3 percent of its force compared with 5.5 percent for the victor"

(Gabriel 2003, 265). They knew that terrorist acts were intended to send the message,

'there's more where that came from!' Not only was terrorism used prior to battle,

sometimes excessive force was used in the midst of battle to send the message 'and don't

try this again!' Terrorism was intended to leave a sense of terror lingering in the hearts of

a people long after a battle was finished.

The *Annals of Assur-nasir-pal II* [22] provides an example of such terrorist activity.

I crossed over to Mt. Kashiyari (and) I approached the city of Kinabu, the fortified
city of Hulaya. I besieged with the mass of my troops (and) my fierce battle
array; I conquered the city. I slew with the sword 800 of their combat troops; I
burned 3,000 captives from them. I did not leave one of them alive as a hostage.
I captured Hulaya, their city ruler, alive. I made a pile of their corpses. I burned

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[22] Annals of Assur-nasir-pal II (1.106-110).

their young boys (and) girls. I flayed Hulaya, their city ruler; (and) I draped his skin over the wall of the city of Damdammusa. I razed, destroyed, (and) burned the city. (Younger 1990, 236)

In a similar vein Sargon[23] and Sennacherib[24] heaped piles of people and skulls as a deterrent to the people they conquered:

> Sargon relates that he slew the warriors of a certain city and piled them up in the gate of the city. Sennacherib shows the etiological force of a memorial heap!: "In order that no one might ever forget the might of Assur my lord, that all peoples might magnify the praises of his warriorship, in the ground where I had brought about the defeat of the king of Babylon and Ummanmenanu the king of Elam--all of their lands together with Parsuas, Anzan, Pasiru, Ellipi, (and) all of Chaldea, as much as there was, all the Arameans--(in the ground) I harvested their skulls like shrivelled grain and I piled (them) up into heaps." (Younger 1990, 224)

Certainly there is psychological value in these ruthless actions, but there also seems to be a perverse pleasure in their descriptions of torture. Ashurnasirpal II bragged on one of his monument inscriptions at Nimrud[25]:

> "I caused great slaughter. I destroyed, I demolished, I burned. I took their warriors prisoner and impaled them on stakes before their cities. . . . I flayed their nobles, as many as had rebelled, and spread their skins out on the piles [of dead bodies]. . . . Many of the captives I burned in a fire. Many I took alive; from some I cut off their hands to the wrist, from others I cut off their noses, ears and fingers; I cut out the eyes of many soldiers. I burnt their young men and women to death" (Davis 2).

These tactics were very effective in causing fear of the Assyrians and their armies. The following is a sampling of inscriptions which speak of the fear that the Assyrians inspired.

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[23] *Letter to the God* (lines 300-302).

[24] *Sennacherib*, Walters Art Gallery lines 108-112.

[25] A. K. Grayson, *Assyrian Royal Inscriptions*, Part 2, p. 124.

Sargon II recounted in the *Great "Summary" Inscription*[26]*,* a battle with Hanunu, the king of Gaza: "I inflicted a decisive defeat on them. Re'e became afraid at the noise of my weapons, and he fled, and his place was not found" (Younger 2000, 296). Sargon II made a similar statement in the *Small "Summary" Inscription*[27]: "Yamani, the Ashdodite, became afraid of my weapons, and he abandoned his wives, his son (and) his daughters" (Younger 2000, 297).

In describing his campaign against Hezekiah and other kings along the Mediterranean coast, Sennacherib[28] wrote "In my third campaign, I marched against Hatti. The awesome splendor of my lordship overwhelmed Lulli, king of Sidon, and he fled overseas far-off. The terrifying nature of the weapon of (the god) Ashur my lord overwhelmed his strong cities" (Cogan 2000, 302). Later he said, "I advanced to Ekron and slew its officials and nobles who had stirred up rebellion and hung their bodies on watchtowers all about the city" (Cogan 2000, 303). And he said about Hezekiah, "He, Hezekiah, was overwhelmed by the awesome splendor of my lordship" (Cogan 2000, 303).[29]

On the *Kurkh Monolith*[30] Shalmaneser III stated, "They prepared for war. They marched against me to do battle. With the exalted power of the divine standard which

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[26] Great "Summary" Inscription, COS 2.118E.

[27] Small "Summary" Inscription, COS 2.118F.

[28] Sennacherib's Siege of Jerusalem, COS 2.119B.

[29] Cf. 2 Kgs 18:13-19:37 and 2 Chr 32:1-23, where the same story is recounted from the Israelite point of view.

[30] Kurkh Monolith, COS 2.113A.

goes before me (and) with the fierce weapons which Assur, my lord, gave, I fought with them. I fought with them. I decisively defeated them" (Younger 2000, 262). Later he continued,

> "I approached the cities of Giammu on the River Balih. They were afraid of my lordly fearfulness (and) the splendor of my fierce weapons; and with their own weapons they killed Giammu, their master." (…) "I departed from the Euphrates. I approached the city of Aleppo (Halman). They were afraid to fight. They seized my feet. I received their tribute of silver (and) gold. I made sacrifices before Hadad of Aleppo (Halman)" (Younger 2000, 263).

The *Suhu Annals of Ninurta-kudurri-usur* [31] show that Ninurta-kudurri-usur understood that by mutilating some of the soldiers it would send a message to others, "I fell upon them (the Arameans) like a blazing fire, and I put to the sword 1,616 of their troops. Furthermore, I removed the hands and lower lips of 80 of their troops; and I let them go free to (spread the news of my) glory" (Younger 2000, 280). A few lines later it became evident that Ninurta-kudurri-usur was aware that this was a record that would define him and his reign. "Anyone in the future who comes forward and says: 'How (did) Ninurta-kudurr-usur, governor of the land of Suhu and the land of Mari, [inflict] this defeat?' (should be told that) I did [not] inflict (this) [by my own power, (but rather) I inflicted this] defeat by the power of Samas and Marduk, A[dad and Apla-Adad, the great gods]" (Younger 2000, 280).

Terrorism did not always involve direct attacks upon people, Sargon II was known for beginning interactions with others by proposing a vassal-suzerain treaty, and then moving on to starvation tactics and agricultural destruction.

> Sargon II did not hesitate to employ more violent tools. Starvation was the most effective and often the only means of bringing a city to surrender. Following, this

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[31] Suhu Annals of Ninurta-kudurri-usur , COS 2.115B

process, Sargon II blocked the Tublias River, on which the Arameans depended for their food supply, and starved the Aramean tribes out of the territory that was inaccessible to the army. The tribes that resisted starvation and still "listened to Merodach-Baladan and Sutur-Nahunki" surrendered when Sargon II's soldiers started to cut down "date palms, their (Aramean) sustenance, and the tree gardens, the pride of their (Aramean) districts." A slow and systematic destruction of the enemy's fruit trees, such as the date palms, whose cultivation required a human lifetime, was a powerful psychological tool of siegecraft that has been used over the centuries. (Dubovsky 213-214)[32]

While terrorism was used upon innocents or soldiers to try to sway an opposing force from fighting, physical intimidation in the form of humiliation directly impacted political or military leaders. The aggressor was sending a message to the army and peoples of a humiliated leader which was meant to cause them to acquiesce to his demands.

Humiliation of political or military leaders

Many times leaders of the defeated nation were punished, usually by a horrific death. "In almost every instance of Assyrian victory the vanquished were dealt severe and public punishment. Defeated monarchs, generals, and high government officials often met horrible and painful deaths in full view of the newly subjugated population" (Gabriel 2005, 181). These deaths were not just mean-spirited or vengeful, typically these leaders broke a treaty with Assyria and they led their people to believe that they

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[32] "S. W. Cole, comparing the tactics employed by nomads during siege, quotes historian F. Donner, 'It was normal procedure for nomads wishing to subject an oasis to resort to a process of psychological warfare; they invested the whole settlement, and then gradually cut down palm trees a few at a time until the residents, watching the destruction of the town's livelihood from the safety of their towers, finally agreed to pay tribute before too much damage was done'" (Dubovsky 214).

could rebel against Assyrian authority. By humiliating and mutilating these leaders a very strong message was being sent to the entire nation, including future leaders.[33]

Tiglath-Pileser III related how he humiliated Rezin and his chief ministers in the *Calah Annals*[34] "That one (i.e. Rezin), in order to save his life, fled alone; and he entered the gate of his city [like] a mongoose. I impaled alive his chief ministers; and I made his country behold (them). I set up my camp around the city for 45 days; and I confined him like a bird in a cage. His gardens, […] orchards without number I cut down; I did not leave a single one" (Younger 2000, 286). [35]

Ninurta-kudurri-usur[36] of Mari said of Samagamni a rebellious clan leader, "I captured him. When I killed him, my heart calmed down. Having stripped off his skin like the skin of a sheep, I set (it) in front of the gate of Al-gabbaribani" (Younger 2000, 280).

Shaming is a psychological aspect of physical intimidation. It is more than defeating an opponent, it is calling his manhood into question.

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[33] "Pedersen has recognized that in the ancient Near East victory and dominance in warfare create honor and respect (pride), while defeat, aside from the drastic effects of suffering, death, devastation, and social disruption, produces shame. This basic assumption, held commonly by the peoples of the ancient Near East, forms the foundation upon which wartime shaming is based. Defeat is shameful in itself and threatens the individual or nation with being shamed by formal shaming actions'" (Huber 65-66).

[34] Calah annals, COS 2.117A.

[35] Sennacherib referred to Hezekiah as a caged bird in a cage as well. Prism of Sennacherib, ANET 287-288 (Pritchard 271).

[36] Suhu Annals of Ninurta-kudurri-usur, COS 2.115B.

<u>Shaming – exposure of weaknesses</u>

Shaming is physical intimidation that is aimed at dehumanizing a person or exposing their weaknesses for all to see. Shaming can be as simple as forcing captives to strip naked as they are paraded from the battlefield. "In the case of captured warriors the naked warrior has been stripped of his ability to defend himself or his nation; he is without protection. His nakedness is symbolic of his vulnerability and demonstrative of his failure" (Huber 73). Shaming can also be aimed at publicly humiliating an entire nation

> Pedersen has recognized that in the ancient Near East victory and dominance in warfare create honor and respect (pride), while defeat, aside from the drastic effects of suffering, death, devastation, and social disruption, produces shame. This basic assumption, held commonly by the peoples of the ancient Near East, forms the foundation upon which wartime shaming is based. Defeat is shameful in itself and threatens the individual or nation with being shamed by formal shaming actions. (Huber 65-66)

Shame is at the core of physical intimidation. It is exposing the weakness of another – defeating them in battle, emphasizing that weakness – forcing them to strip or walk in shackles, then perhaps leaving a permanent reminder of that weakness – mutilating them in some way that can never be covered. The enemy's goal is to leave shamed soldiers living in a shameful nation that will be reminded day after day that they are weak, effeminate and powerless.

> "One of the important contexts within which a great deal of shaming occurs is warfare and the experience of capture in the hands of the enemy. One of the characteristics of warfare in the ancient Near East, and particularly in Assyria, is the use of psychological warfare. It is within the area of psychological warfare that shaming is employed. Saggs, in his study of Assyrian warfare, observes that inhumane treatment and punishment of defeated warriors and leaders are not just carried out for sadistic purposes, though the Assyrians may have enjoyed the infliction of pain. But, such tactics are also important because of the psychological impact. A captured vassal is not just vindictively tortured, he is made a public example to serve as warning by demonstration of what happens to

delinquents. According to Saggs, it is publicity, not always pain, that is the primary motive for shameful and inhumane treatment of captives. They openly boast of their violence. In the absence of mass media communication, shame and terror are the main means of softening up an enemy population in advance." (Huber 69-70)

Physical intimidation did not have to include damage to others. The presentation of the troops could affect the enemy, and many times a physical reminder was left in a conquered nation to remind them of their vassal status.[37]

Displays and arrays – presentation of troops and armaments, reliefs and reminder monuments

The way that troops were arrayed, with banners, coordinated colors, armaments, instruments and idols could be intimidating to the enemy and invigorating to national troops.

When a conquering king erected stelae in the heart of a conquered nation he was intimidating them. The monument was a constant reminder that their land was his not theirs. Tiglath Pileser III[38] described leaving a stela in the palace of a conquered nation, "[I seized his property (and) his gods]. [I made] an image of the great gods, my lords, <and> an image of my lordship out of gold. [I set (it) up in the palace of Gaza; (and) I counted it among the gods of their land]" …. "[I set up] my royal stela in the city of the brook of Egypt" (Younger 2000, 290).

Hadadezer king of Aram Damascus established a monument at the Euphrates River which was meant as "a symbol of his dominion or rule over the coalition states"

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[37] Shishak I and Sargon II also left memorial stelae at Megiddo. See ANET 263-264 (Pritchard 239-240), and Ashdod ANET 284-287 (Pritchard 266) respectively.

[38] Summary Inscription 8, also mentioned in Summary Inscriptions 9 and 10.

(Gabriel 2003, 265). Hadadezer's monument is mentioned in the Hebrew Bible in 2 Sam 8:3 "David defeated Hadadezer son of Rehob, king of Zobah, who was then on his way to restore his monument at the Euphrates river".[39]

The Assyrians depicted the fierce power of their nation through the use of reliefs. "Sargon II had his main palace hall decorated with brutal reliefs depicting what he had done to his enemies. The room was used for greeting foreign dignitaries who usually did not miss the point" (Gabriel 2005, 181). In a similar vein Sennacherib portrayed his siege of Lachish in reliefs: "In an exciting and unusual correlation between art and artifact, sculptured reliefs from Sennacherib's palace at Ninevah depict the Lachish siege right down to the siege ramp" (Melville 343).[40]

Physical intimidation was psychological warfare that was meant to distract and dishearten the opposing forces. Next we explore a form of psychological warfare that focused on encouraging one's own troops to have hope and confidence.

3. Rallying the troops

When considering the impact of psychological warfare we would naturally consider words and actions that are meant to affect opposing military forces, but the psychological tactics employed upon one's own troops was also very important. Sasson

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[39] The same story is recounted in 1 Chr 18:3.

[40] "The psychological aspect of Assyrian warfare is also brought out by the manner in which bas reliefs with war scenes were used. In Ashur-nasir-pal's palace at Calah, scenes of war predominated in the bas reliefs only in the hall which probably served as an audience chamber; it is a reasonable conclusion that this predominance of war scenes was to reinforce in the minds of visiting rulers and ambassadors their consciousness of Assyrian military might. In other rooms of the palace the scenes were mostly of religious or ceremonial topics" (Saggs 249).

noted that "The leaders of Mari were conscious that the outcome of battles often depended upon the mental attitude of the fighters" (Sasson 36).

Just as wars were often motivated by the instinct for self-preservation so the individual ancient warriors were also motivated by the fear of death.[41] In addition to battle-related injuries, soldiers were threatened by disease, lack of food and exhaustion. Most battles were fought using swords, daggers, bows, arrows, spears and slings and they eventually involved hand-to-hand combat. The odds of returning whole from battle were very slim.

> "The life of the Egyptian soldier was likely to be either routine or very tough when on campaign. An Egyptian exercise book, entitled *Be a Scribe*, that deliberately portrays the life of the soldier as unpleasant nevertheless gives some idea of what military service could be like: 'He is called up for Syria. He may not rest. There are no clothes, no sandals. His march is uphill through mountains. He drinks water every third day; it is smelly and tastes of salt. His body is ravaged by illness. The enemy comes and life recedes from him. He is told, 'Quick forward, valiant soldier! Win for yourself a good name!' He does not know what he is about. His body is weak, his legs fail him. If he leaps and joins the deserters, all his people are imprisoned. He dies on the edge of the desert, and there is none to perpetuate his name.'" *[italics mine]* (Archer 12).

Opposing forces played upon this apprehension to their advantage by trying to stir up fear and doubt. National political and military leaders sought to harness this trepidation as a motivator by using words and actions that would make their soldiers feel invincible on one hand or willing to sacrifice their lives on the other. "Ancient Near Eastern tradition judged a warrior's death reputable and praiseworthy, and those who bravely sacrificed their lives in battle could achieve eternal fame. This paradoxical belief, found in so many cultures, is well attested also for Assyria where respect and

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[41] "Thus the (seemingly autonomous) aggression may in fact evoke the very fear and threat of annihilation, whose existence the self tried to repress and deny" (Shalit 419).

esteem in general were all-important" (Radner 39). Leaders wanted their soldiers to fight with a sense of abandonment, with the sense that live or die, they had honored their country and their name. From the Kirta Epic, a Hurrian tale found in the Ugaritic texts, we find this statement about army conscripts, "The only son must shut up his house, the widow hire someone (to go). The invalid must take up his bed, the blind man grope his way along. The newly-wed must go forth, entrusting his wife to someone else, his beloved to someone unrelated" (Pardee 1997, 334).

A battle or indeed an entire war could hinge upon how effectively the leaders convinced their troops of the urgency and value of their mission. Describing the Battle of Megiddo, where a Canaanite coalition force battled the Egyptian army, Gabriel opined that, "the forces opposing the Egyptians lacked the cohesion, command and control, and reliability that the professional national force of the Egyptians possessed" (Gabriel 2005, 77).

Troops were affected by the actions and words of their leaders. First, we examine instances where military leaders in the ancient Near East used words to inspire their troops.

<u>Rallying commanders and troops through the use of words</u>

Political and military leaders spoke to their troops about the enemy in hopes that they could characterize them, their kings and their gods as weak and powerless. The Egyptian *Annals of Thutmose III*[42] describing the battle against Megiddo has Thutmose III make "the following command to the entire army, [saying]: 'Make your preparations,

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[42] Annals of Thutmose III, COS 2.2A.

get your weapons ready because one will engage in fighting with that feeble enemy in the morning'" (Hoffmeier 11).

Leaders tried to stir emotions in their troops that would harness the angst that was also present because of the fear of death. One of these motivating factors was revenge. "Like in Hittite and Egyptian ideology, there is a stress on revenge. (…) It is a vengeance which is a just recompense, a just payment for a crime, and not simply brutal revenge. (Younger 1990, 234).

The Egyptians used rhetoric which painted any other nation as revenge worthy, "to the Egyptians, the enemy was arrogant. He trusted in his many troops and not in Amun-Re. He arrogantly rebelled against the order of the Egyptian pharaoh and the Egyptian deities. The Egyptians' concept of the enemy was to regard them as cowardly, vain and boastful" (Younger 1990, 182).

While disparaging the enemy, military leaders simultaneously exalted their troops, their king and their gods. In the Kadesh Battle Inscriptions of Ramses II we find the king shouting this admonition to his troops, "Steady your hearts, my soldiers; behold me victorious, me alone, for Amun is my helper, his hand is with me."[43] Rowlett notes that this battle cry contains these elements "the exhortation to bravery, and the assurance of divine presence and help," and "the admonition to follow the King into battle" (Rowlett 79-80).

Later, in the *Annals of Thutmose III* [44] we find that sentries were posted just to encourage their troops. "Resting in the enclosure of life, prosperity, and health. Making

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[43] Kadesh Battle Inscriptions of Ramses II, AEL II, p. 67.

[44] Annals of Thutmose III, COS 2.2A.

provisions for the officers and distributing rations to the attendants. Sentries were posted for the army, saying to them: 'Be courageous, be courageous, keep awake, keep awake!'" (Hoffmeier 11).

In a scene that is reminiscent of Joshua 1 warriors in the *Epic of Gilgamesh* were encouraged with the phrase 'fear not'.[45] "In the Gilgamesh Epic, the phrase 'fear not' is used by Gilgamesh and Enkidu to encourage each other to be fearless when they are entering battle against the monster Huwawa (Old Babylonian version, Tablet III, 1.12; ANET, p. 79)" (Rowlett 99).

Religious fervor was a useful tool for exhorting troops as well. Soldiers were convinced that they were fighting for their gods, or that their gods were fighting for them and this gave the soldiers a sense of purpose and power that they were part of something larger than themselves. "By making these people believe that: 'they are in contact with the ultimate powers of existence, ideology will greatly reinforce their motivation to act. They will gain courage from perceiving themselves as part of a cosmic scheme; actions that they would not dare to envisage before will now have the legitimacy which proximity to the scared provides'" (Younger 1990, 233).

The impact of the gods was not limited to being an encouragement to troops. Divine figures were also considered to have impact upon the battle itself – psychologically and physically.

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[45] Cf. Deut 1:21, where Moses is recounting the sending out of the twelves spies.

Troops could be rallied through words, but when a commander did something to rally the troops it was far more effective. Commanders understood that their words could motivate their troops, but their actions impacted their troops even more.

Rallying commanders and troops through the use of actions

The desire to please the gods, to have the gods fight with them and for them ran through every aspect of the preparation for battle. Commanders fulfilled religious rites publicly before their troops to give them the confidence that their god would be with them in battle.[46] The troops needed the assurance that their gods were with them in battle. Sasson notes that "The Mari diviner is known to have personally led troops into battles, an act that no doubt allowed morale to remain consistently high among the troops" (Sasson 37).[47]

Soldiers were also made to feel that they were part of something larger than themselves. They were participating with their deities in accomplishing something noble and divine. The Persian 'Immortals' were a great example of this sense of fraternity and community. "The centerpiece of the imperial army was a force of 10,000 called the 'Immortals.' In Persian they were called amarata, literally 'those without death.' (…) The name 'Immortals' was derived from the fact that the force was never permitted to go below 10,000 men. A dead, wounded, or ill soldier was immediately replaced in the ranks so that the force was always maintained at full strength" (Gabriel 2005, 308).

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[46] See pages 47-48 of this dissertation for examples of kings performing public religious ceremonies.

[47] Cf. Num 31:1-6, where the priest Phinehas goes with the Israelites into battle.

Typically military officials strove for unity of purpose in their troops, which encouraged the warriors to support each other. The Assyrian army, which was larger and more diverse than most other armies, tried different tactics to maximize the effectiveness of their troops. Radner notes that from the ninth century B.C.E and on the Assyrian army transitioned from a conscripted army to a standing professional army by including warriors from defeated armies. The use of mercenaries brought about some conflict and competition between different groups within the army. The Assyrians encouraged the competition between the various populations so that each group would be internally motivated by one another and externally motivated by the other groups. These divisions also discouraged alliances between the various groups which could challenge the military or royal leadership. "The different contingents constituting the Assyrian army were allowed and encouraged to preserve and develop their own customs and idiosyncrasies; rather than being forged into a unified army, its individual components found themselves in intense competition with each other for royal recognition and favour" (Radner 39).

Some rituals were performed as soldiers were being inducted into the army. These rituals were intended to separate the men from their former pursuits and focus them on what was to come.[48] From the Middle Hittite period we find the *First Soldiers' Oath*[49] which was a performed as a soldier was being initiated into military service.

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[48] "What attitudes about warfare are suggested by the common features of primitive religion? The signals are mixed. The constant participation of the spirit world conveys a sense of 'bellicism'—of warfare as a part of the natural world. At the same time, warfare seems to be regarded, even by the most warlike, as a sort of interruption of normal life. Warriors must be dressed and painted so as to change their personalities. Special ceremonies signal their departure from normal life, and others, their return to it. Above all, warfare requires justification: The constant efforts to secure the favor of the spirit world imply that fighting and killing to avenge wrongs are required by the order of the world" (Dawson 40).

[The divine(?) …]s and says, ['Becaus]e [this person wa]s living and used to find heaven above, now they have blinded him in the place of the oath. […] Who transgre[sses] these oaths and takes deceptive action against the king of Hatti, and set (his) eyes upon the land of Hatti as an enemy, may these oath deities seize him and [may they] blind his army too, and further, may they deafen them. May comrade not see comrade. May this one not hear [that one]. May they give them a horrible d[eath]. May they fetter their feet with a wrapping below, and bind their hands above. Just as the oath deities bound the troops of the land of Arzawa by their hands and feet and set them in a heap, in the same way may they bind his troops too, and set them in a heap.' (Billie Jean Collins 165)

The *First Soldiers' Oath* also incorporated symbols to make the oath tangible and memorable - yeast, wax and sheep fat; sinew and salt; malt and beer; a woman's garment, a distaff and a spindle and a broken arrow; a woman, a blind man and a deaf man; a figurine of a man with its insides full of water; an inflated bladder; broken models of a plow, a wagon and a chariot; a red pelt; water sprinkled on a fire (Billie Jean Collins 166-167). The *Second Soldiers' Oath*[50] in the New Hittite period incorporated torches, broken bowls; poured water, poured wine, water poured into wine, a rock which symbolizes the heaviness of the oath (Billie Jean Collins 167-168).

The Egyptian *Execration Texts*[51] were meant to put curses on Egypt's enemies. These curses were thought to affect their enemies negatively in a supernatural way, but they were also an assurance to the troops that their gods were supporting them.

 From the Old Kingdom through the Roman era, priests performed official ritual cursings of the potential enemies of Egypt. The ceremonies included the breaking of red pots and figurines inscribed with formal 'Execration Texts' listing Nubians, Asiatics, Libyans, living and deceased Egyptians, as well as generally threatening forces. The texts themselves contain no explicit curses, but instead serve to

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[49] The First Soldiers' Oath, COS 1.66.

[50] The Second Soldiers' Oath, COS 1.67.

[51] Execration Texts, COS 1.32.

identify the fate of the enemies with that of the destroyed pot or image. The texts were seemingly compiled by the state chancellory, since they were updated to reflect changes in rulers and territories. (Ritner 50)

The curses were arranged geographically and often took the form of "the ruler of (specified place) and all the stricken ones who are with him". In one such text some geographical sections closed with this listing "Their strong men, their messengers, their confederates, their allies, who will rebel, who will plot, who will fight, who will say that they will fight, who will say that they will rebel, in this entire land" (Ritner 51-52).

Hamblin perceives the rituals associated with the *Execration Texts* to be a form of psychological warfare meant to rally the troops.

> From the Egyptian perspective, the ritual cursing of enemies and the invocation of magical protection was a natural part of any military campaign, simply another form of invoking the aid of the gods in battle – always the ultimate source of victory in war. In another sense, however, these texts may also represent an early form of 'psychological warfare', in which the morale of the Egyptian soldier could be hardened by priests and magicians calling blessings upon the Egyptians and curses upon their enemies. (Hamblin 418)

We find record of the Middle Hittite *Ritual Between the Pieces*[52] that was performed after a defeat in battle:[53]

> If the troops are defeated by the enemy, then they prepare the 'behind the river' ritual as follows: Behind the river they sever a human, a billy-goat, a puppy (and) a piglet. On one side they set halves and on the other side they set the (other) halves. In front (of these) they make a gate of hawthorn and stretch a cord(?) up over (it). Then, before the gate, on one side they burn a fire and on the other side they burn a fire. The troops go through, but when they come alongside the river, they sprinkle water over them(selves). They perform the ritual again in the steppe. They celebrate the ritual of the steppe in the same way. (Billie Jean Collins 160-161)

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[52] The "Ritual Between the Pieces", COS 1.61.

[53] Cf. Gen 15, where Moses divides animals in halves and a "smoking oven, and flaming torch" (v. 17) appeared to pass between the animal pieces.

After securing divine blessing the most effective way to motivate troops was for the king himself to accompany the troops into battle. This was a risky proposition because the death of the king was also the most demotivating factor for troops.[54] We see an example of this in the Battle of Megiddo.

> Prior to the Battle of Megiddo, in their commander's conference Thutmose and the Egyptian generals were trying to figure out the best way to approach the coalition of Canaanites. The generals advised a safe, strategic approach along the Ta'anach or Aruna road. Thutmose rejected their advice and decided to take the narrow road to Megiddo, sacrificing security for surprise. He quieted the anger of his field commanders by telling them he would personally lead the army through the narrow defile. His officers could either follow their commander or remain behind. Here, for the first time in history, is an example of a commander challenging his officers to follow him into battle at great risk or forever be branded cowards. (Gabriel 2005, 82)

Gabriel continues, "The result of the gamble was that Thutmose moved his army through the mountains under the very noses of the enemy into the valley and exited directly across from the city of Megiddo itself, achieving complete tactical surprise (Gabriel 2005, 83).

Another example of a king leading his troops into battle was Sargon fighting Rusa of Urartu:

> Sargon 'was not afraid of his masses of troops, despited his horses, I did not cast a glance at the multitude of mail-clad warriors.' With no line of retreat, exhausted troops, no prospect of reinforcement, and an enemy assault likely to begin at any moment, Sargon may have concluded that he had to do something--anything--to stir his troops to the last final effort that every solider knows he may be asked to give. Sargon ordered an attack. To rally his men, Sargon led the attack from his war chariot and 'plunged into his midst like a swift frightful javelin.'" The attack worked and the army of Urartu was gradually defeated. (Gabriel 2005, 198)

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[54] See pages 36-39, 45-46 and 97-106 of this dissertation for further discussions about the impact a leader had upon his troops.

The *Gebel Barkal Stela of Thutmose III*[55] described Thutmose as the ultimate warrior leading his troops into battle.

> He is a king who fights alone, without a multitude to back him up. He is more effective than a myriad of numerous armies. An equal to him has not been, (he is) a warrior who extends his arm on the battlefield, no one can touch him. He is one who immediately overwhelms all foreign lands while at the head of his army, as he shoots between the two divisions of his troops, like a star he crosses the sky, entering into the throng, [while a bl]ast of his flame is against them with fire, turning into nothing those who lie prostrate in their blood. It is his uraeus that overthrows them for him, his flaming serpent that subdues his enemies, with the result that numerous armies of Mitanni were overthrown in the space of an hour, annihilated completely like those who had not existed, in the manner of those who are burned, because of that which the arms of the good god performed, great of might in the melee, who slaughters everyone, by himself alone, the king of Upper and Lower Egypt, Menkheperre, may he live forever. (Hoffmeier 14-15)

This description of Thutmose leading his troops into battle at Megiddo is found in the *Annals of Thutmose III*[56]

> His majesty set off on his electrum chariot, equipped with an impressive array of weapons, like strong-armed Horus, Lord of Action, like Montu of Thebes, his father [Amun] making his arms victorious." He continued, "Then his majesty overpowered them while leading his army. They saw his majesty overpower them. They fled, falling headlong [toward] Megiddo with fearful faces, they having abandoned their horses and chariots of gold and silver in order that they be dragged and hoisted by their clothes into this city (…) The fear of his majesty had penetrated [their limbs], their arms were exhausted, [for(?)] his Uraeus overpowered them. (Hoffmeier 11)

The king could also show that his troops needed to fear him more than they needed to fear death in battle. Ramses II exemplified this at the battle of Kadesh

> The next morning Ramses formed up his army, but not for battle. He was furious at his chariot commanders. Comprised of the nobility of Egypt, they had broken and run, and their cowardice had almost cost him his life. Seeing an opportunity to send a strong social message to the Egyptian nobility as well as to restore discipline to the army, he personally began beheading the leaders of those units

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[55] The Gebal Barkal Stela of Thutmose III, COS 2.2B.

[56] The Annals of Thutmose III, COS 2.2A.

that had fled! Sometime during the day, Muwatallis sent Ramses a message suggesting that there be an end to the fighting. Rameses agreed, and a few days later he withdrew his army. The Hittites remained in Kadesh. (Gabriel 2005, 124)

Some decisions by a leader hurt the morale of their troops and caused problems for them, such as using mercenary soldiers.[57] "After Cyrus the Younger's introduction of Greek mercenary soldiers into the Persian army, the practice continued, often leading to disaster and betrayal as the Persians had to contend with a military fifth column of Greek mercenaries in their midst" (Gabriel 2005, 308).

Just as stelae, inscriptions, reliefs were used as psychological warfare against other nations physical symbols were also used to inspire confidence the national troops. Samsi-Ilu, Assyrian commander-in-chief, provides this example in the *Stone Lions Inscription*[58]:

> At that time, I erected two outstanding lions in the gate of the city of Kar-Shalmaneser, the city of my lordship, on the right and on the left; and I named them. The name of the first is: 'The lion who […] fierce umu-demon, unrivalled attack, who overwhelms the insubmissive, who obtains what his heart desires'. The name of the second, which stands before the gate, is: 'Who gores through resistance, who levels the enemy country, who casts out evildoers, (and) who brings in good people.' (Younger 2000, 278)

What soldiers wore could have an impact upon the opposing forces and upon the soldiers themselves. A soldier who felt that he was well protected and imposing to others would fight with greater fervor and confidence. The Persian armies were known to wear a black hood into hand-to-hand combat which probably affected the opposing army by giving the Persians an ominous appearance and may have helped the Persian troops focus

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[57] "While at least some mercenaries served in the Battle of Megiddo, there is no proof of the large scale use of hired soldiers until the Battle of Kadesh in about 1290 B.C." (Lanning 5).

[58] Samsi-ilu – Stone Lions Inscription, COS 2.115A.

on the individuals they were facing in combat. "Interestingly, the heavy infantry wore black hoods over their heads and faces when engaged in close combat. Whether this practice was based in some strange custom of the Persians or whether some genius reckoned that a hood would reduce the sounds of close-order battle in the ears of the soldier and thus reduce one of the more compelling elements of fear is unknown" (Gabriel 2005, 311).

One of the best motivators is to be recognized for excelling in an endeavor. Gabriel noted that the "Egyptians often rewarded the bravest men with their highest military decoration, The Fly of Valor, a small golden fly on a gold chain" (Gabriel 2003, 254). The Assyrian army rewarded valiant warriors with precious jewelry, purple robes, highly decorated swords, golden bracelets and other rewards. "Distinctive jewelry, weaponry and garments are the most visible rewards in kind which could include material goods, slaves and land as well as tax breaks, and definitely signaled to the world the bearer's high standing at court and within the military hierarchy" (Radner 48). Perhaps military decorations of this nature led to the many badges and pins that are typically bestowed upon modern troops.

We have already noted that the morale of the troops was affected by rituals performed in regard to a nation's god. Now we will examine divine intervention in ancient Near Eastern warfare.

4. Divine intervention

In the ancient Near East it was assumed that there was divine intervention into all important areas of life including weather, farming, fertility and, of course, war. The gods were perceived to affect the outcome of battles and wars to varying degrees. Rowlett

stated that there was a "synergism of divine and human action" (Rowlett 80). Sometimes nations believed that the gods were actually fighting battles for them, other times they felt that the gods were fighting through the army, while other times they thought that the gods were vaguely interested in the wars of their nation and gave their army emotional support only. From the *Mesha Stele*[59], Deijl found that gods were involved differently depending upon whether the battle was defensive or offensive.

> After all, we saw two types of wars in Mesha's inscription, each with a different type of divine involvement. On the one hand we found a defensive war, in which the god's support is presupposed and in which the god fights for the king (for example by means of a miracle), on the other hand we have an offensive war, in which the god gives the assignment to the king and in which the king conquers a city or an area for his god. (Deijl 362)

This next section shows how gods in ancient Near Eastern literature affected warfare psychologically by promising to help their nation, by causing fear and confusion in the enemies, by fighting physically for them, or by winning the battle for them without the army's assistance.

The gods rally commanders and troops

Battles usually arose because one party felt that they were wronged by the other – the offending nation stopped paying tribute, encroached upon or invaded disputed territory, or they caused harm to persons or property. Theologically this meant that the offending nation offended their gods as well.[60] Of course, the very reason the offending nation did so was that they felt their gods were asking them to take that action to right

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[59] The Inscription of King Mesha, COS 2.23.

[60] "As in the Bible and other ancient Near Eastern texts, the Hittite text identified the national territory with a deity (a goddess, in this case) as 'her' land and 'her' boundaries. Therefore, a transgression against the realm is a transgression against the deity" (Rowlett 87).

some other perceived wrong. Wars were as much about theology as they were about the

extenuating circumstances. "Primitive and ancient societies all thought of war as an act

of human and divine justice, as the avenging of wrongs. And as a constitutional act, it

was the ultimate expression of group loyalty. They did not think of war as a strategic act

to carry out purposes of state" (Dawson 42).

The nations believed they were righting the wrongs done to them emotionally,

physically and theologically, and their gods were actually working through them. "War

acquired a legal meaning in this context: in the Ancient Near Eastern perception, the

outcome had to coincide with the god's verdict, with the execution of the punishment"

(Deijl 52).

Nations performed rituals and ceremonies to ask for their gods' leadership and

blessing in battle. "In organized chiefdoms, the rituals of war take on a theocratic

function: The chief is a deputy of the gods, sometimes divine himself, and all warfare

has to be explained as an act of the gods, fought for their honor and glory and the honor

and glory of their chiefly champion' (Dawson 41). From Mari we find these preparations

for war:

> Before an important engagement, a number of steps were taken by the king and
> his officers to propitiate the gods. A letter was sent to the ruler's protective spirit
> ([ARM] IV:68:14-25, and most likely I:3) who is known to have occasionally
> responded (II:130:26). On appropriate occasions sacrifices were offered by the
> king (I:10:13'-14'). The last also invoked the gods (II:51:10-11). Prophetic
> utterances were recorded. They often consisted of reassuring predictions of an
> enemy's defeat (X:6:3'-8'; 7:20-22; 8:12-18; XIII:23:8-15; 114:11ff; A.4260), of
> warnings of rebellions (X:7:9-10; 50:13) and against the treachery and deceit of
> presumed allies (X:80:11-19). *[brackets mine]* (36)

Near the beginning of the *Ten Year Annals of Mursili II*[61], we find that the king prioritized goddess worship above other preparations for war.[62]

> When I, My majesty, sat on my father's throne, while I had not yet gone against any of the enemy foreign lands who were in a state of hostilities with me, I concerned myself with and performed the regular festivals of the Sungoddess of Arinna, my lady (…) The Sungoddess of Arinna heard my words and stood by me. After I sat down on my father's throne, in ten years I vanquished these enemy foreign lands and destroyed them.

When the kings felt that they had their gods' blessing then they would proceed with their battle plans. Many times battles were seen as a conflict between the gods of the nations involved. "The national god was considered the actual king of his country. A war between peoples was therefore essentially a war between the accompanying national gods. In principle, victory and defeat equaled the god's victory [or,] respectively[,] defeat. The king consulted his god on the matter of his will." *[brackets mine]* (Deijl 663)

When a nation went to war it was common for them to bring divine images and omens with them for psychological support and at times to be consulted in an oracular fashion.[63] "The statue of the god really represented the god. It was therefore the custom to take the statue of the god away when a victory occurred in order to emphasize the breach between the god and the subjected people and in order to break their morale. It was just as common to bring the statue of the god in safety when a defeat was looming in order to prevent morale from plummeting" (Deijl 545).

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[61] The Ten Year Annals of Great King Mursili II of Hatti, COS 2.16, p. 84.

[62] See Rowlett, p. 87 for further development of this topic.

[63] Cf. 1 Sam 14:16-23.

Pieter Bienkowski wrote "Diviners marched with the army and took omens to discover the favourability of every military plan," he continued, "armies were divided into divisions and wings, each with its own patron deity and standard" (Bienkowski 316). This theological element gave each nation the sense that they were fighting a 'holy war'. Their country represented what was right and good against the vile enemy. David O'Connor said the Egyptians developed an

> "Egyptian self-image as a culturally superior group whose foreign activities were encouraged by their gods … A potent factor in sustaining the sense of Egyptian superiority was its supernatural validity, which made reverses abroad, however serious, mere incidents in a cosmic drama in which Egypt and its gods would ultimately triumph. Mythic and real struggles were inextricably fused; the state, personified by the king, ritually aided the gods in their implicitly always successful struggle against supernatural enemies and disorder, while the gods promised the state ultimate victory over its foreign enemies, who were themselves part of that threatening chaos. (Younger 1990, 178)

The following texts exemplify the idea that warfare was inspired by the gods. A Babylonian boundary stone inscription of Nebuchadnezzar I[64] claimed: "By the command of Ishtar and Adad, the gods who are arbiters of battle, he (Nebuchadnezzar) turned evil against the king of Elam, and destruction overtook him. And King Nebuchadnezzar triumphed he captured the land of Elam, he plundered its possessions" (Younger 1990, 237).

About Assur-nasir-pal II, the *Standard Inscription*[65] claims: "When Assur, the lord who called me by name (and) made my kingship great, entrusted his merciless weapon in my lordly arms, I felled with the sword in the midst of battle the wide-spread

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[64] L. W. King, *Babylonian Boundary Stones and Memorial Tablets in the British Museum*, p. 33.

[65] The Standard Inscription, W de Filippi, *The Royal Inscriptions of Assur-Nasir-Apli II*, pp. 4-17.

troops of the Lullume. With the aid of Samas and Adad, my divine helpers, I thundered

like Adad, the destroyer, against the armies of the lands of Nairi, Habhi, the Shubare, and

Nirib" (Younger 1990, 121).

On the *Cyrus Cylinder*[66] we find Cyrus' conviction that Marduk sent him to return

the worship of Marduk to Babylon which Nabonidus terminated:

> He surveyed and looked throughout all the lands, searching for a righteous king
> whom he would support. He called out his name: Cyrus, king of Anshan; he
> pronounced his name to be king over all (the world). He (Marduk) made the land
> of Gutium and all the Umman-manda bow in submission at his feet. And he
> (Cyrus) shepherded with justice and righteousness all the black-headed people,
> over whom he (Marduk) had given him victory. Marduk, the great lord, guardian
> (?) of his people, looked with gladness upon his good deeds and upright heart. He
> ordered him to march to his city Babylon. He set him on the road to Babylon and
> like a companion and friend, he went at his side. His vast army, whose number,
> like the water of the river, cannot be known, marched at his side fully armed. He
> made him enter his city Babylon without fighting or battle; he saved Babylon
> from hardship. He delivered Nabonidus, the king who did not revere him, into his
> hands. (Cogan 315)

Oddly, Cyrus was convinced that a foreign god, Marduk, asked him to save the

god and the Babylonian people from the errant Nabonidus. Either Cyrus truly believed

that he was called by a Babylonian god to save the Babylonian people from their own

king, or he was a master in the art of propaganda.[67] "In this case, it had become clear that

the gods wanted this defeat and that the king had disregarded their will by dragging their

statues around. It would be easy for the conqueror to win over the sympathy of the

population, by returning the gods to their own temples. This is precisely what Cyrus did"

(Deijl 545).

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[66] Cyrus Cylinder, COS 2.124.

[67] In Jer 27 Jeremiah tells Zedekiah king of Judah that Judah must serve
Nebuchadnezzar. In Jer 43:8-13 Nebuchadnezzar was said to be sent by YHWH to bring
judgment upon Egypt.

When a battle was complete the victors believed that their gods had delivered on their promise to aid them. The aid given to them is typically described in vague terms, just expressing a confidence that their gods affected the outcome of the battle. This confidence is explained well in this analysis of a Hittite phrase, "The Hittite phrase para handandatar ('miracle') is very interesting. H. Wolf concludes that this phrase means 'divine power usually displayed as an outpouring of grace to strengthen, deliver, or encourage its recipient. It is a means of preserving divine order and justice, and it can be accompanied by miracles'" (Younger 1990, 209).

The following texts exemplify such confidence. On a Ramses III text of victory over Libyans at Medinet Habu[68] "The Libyans exclaimed '… we were trapped, they drew us in, like a net. The gods caused us to succeed, indeed, (merely) to offer us up, to overthrow us for Egypt! (So,) let us make a brt (a treaty) with [the Egyptians (?) before they de]stroy us …'" (Younger 1990, 204).

In the *Comprehensive Annals of Mursili*[69] we find this confession of strength received from the stormgod.

> So I turned my face in the opposite direction toward Pittapara. But when night fell, I turned about and advanced against Pitaggatalli. I marched the whole night through, and daybreak found me on the outskirts of Sapidduwa. And as soon as the sun rose I advanced to battle against him' and those 9,000 men whom Pitaggatalli had brought with him joined in battle with me, and I fought with them. And the gods stood by me: the proud stormgod, my lord, the sungoddess of Arinna, my lady, the stormgod of Hatti, the protective deity of Hatti, the stormgod of the army, Istar of the field, and Yarris. And I destroyed the enemy. (Younger 1990, 207)

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[68] KRI V, pp. 58-66 (lines 38, 52).

[69] A. Goetze, *Dei Annalen des Mursilis*, pp. 156-159.

The gods fight psychologically for their troops

As was mentioned earlier, at times the gods were said to cause confusion in the opposing forces so that the troops made poor decisions or just fled. This could simply be a formulaic way of attributing a victory to the gods, or there could have been a sense that the gods truly did inspire fear and confusion in the opposing forces. "Sometimes the deities are said to march at the king's side in battle and fight for him. The gods often intervene by inspiring terror in the enemies, thus 'overwhelming' them, which may cause them to flee, lose or surrender" (Rowlett 112).

Shalmaneser III stated on the *Kurkh Monolith*[70]

In the month of Iyyar, the thirteenth day, I departed from Ninevah. I crossed the Tigris River (and) I traversed Mount Hasamu and Mount Dihnunu. I approached the city of Lalatu, which belonged to Ahuni, (the man) of Bit-Adini. The fear of the splendor of Assur, my lord, overwhelmed them. In order to save their lives they went up(stream). I razed, destroyed and burned the city. (Younger 2000, 261)

Sargon II boasted concerning Iamani king of Ashdod "The terror(-inspiring) glamor of Ashur my lord, overpowered (however) the king of Meluhha"[71] (Pritchard 267); and similarly of Aziru of Ashdod, "Their king who had put his trust in his own power and (therefore) did not bow to my (divinely ordained) rulership, heard about the approach of my expedition (while I was still) far away, and the splendor of my lord Ashur overwhelmed him and …he fled…"[72] (Pritchard 269).

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[70] Kurkh Monolith, COS 2.113A.

[71] Annals of Sargon II room XIV, ANET 284-287.

[72] Broken Prism A of Sargon II, ANET 284-287.

Causing fear or confusion in the enemy is another of the vague ways that nations believed their gods fought for them. At times there appeared to be tangible ways that they gods fought for their people.

<u>The gods fight physically for their troops</u>

Sometimes texts express that the gods fought for the troops physically to encourage the national troops and to help defeat the enemy.[73] An example of a god's physical intervention in a battle is found the annals of the Hittite king Mursili "As I marched and arrived at the Lawasa Mountains, the mighty stormgod, my lord, showed his 'divine power' and shot a 'thunderbolt'. My army saw the 'thunderbolt' and the land of Arzawa saw it and the 'thunderbolt' went and struck the land of Arzawa . . ." (Weinfeld 139). Other translations referred to the 'thunderbolt' as a meteor.

Not only could gods intervene physically in battles at times, they could also be credited for winning the battle by themselves. Logically, if there are few instances of divine intervention in a battle in a physical way in the ancient Near East there are also few instances of gods winning a battle for their troops.

<u>The gods win the battle for their troops</u>

If a god was credited with winning a battle it was again in a vague sense as in this inscription from Nabopolassar,[74]

> He (Marduk) had Nergal, the strongest among the gods, walk at my side; he killed my enemies, he felled my foes. The Assyrian who had, because of the wrath of the gods, ruled the land of Akkad and who had oppressed the people of the land

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[73] There are several instances of this in the Hebrew Bible. This topic is more fully treated on pages 176-178 in this dissertation.

[74] F. N. H. Al-Rawi, 'Nabopolassar's Restoration Work on the Wall 'Imgur-Enlil' at Babylon', *Iraq* 47 (1985), pp. 1-13. Lines I.24-II.5.

with his heavy yoke--I, the weak, the powerless, who constantly seeks after the lord of lords, with the mighty strength of Nabu and Marduk my lords, I chased them (the Assyrians) out of the land of Akkad and caused (the Babylonians) to throw off their yoke. (Younger 1990, 236)

While divine intervention in warfare was assumed in the ancient Near East, it is evident that this aid was typically not physical. There was a general understanding that the gods supported battles that were just and in accordance with their will.

Conclusion

We found that psychological warfare was used commonly in the ancient Near East. We documented instances of propaganda, physical intimidation, rallying the troops and divine intervention throughout the bronze and iron ages in several ancient Near Eastern societies.

Propaganda could preclude combat if the parties agreed to a treaty. If diplomacy did not bring resolution then threats and taunts were often exchanged. Each faction was gauging the fortitude of the other. We also explored 'advance word' which is an attempt to incite fear and submission by spreading true and false information about the size and capabilities of an army.

In the realm of physical intimidation, Assyria was known for its use of terrorism to control other nations. By killing or maiming small segments of a society Assyria effectively brought nations into submission. Physical intimidation could also involve humiliation of political or military leaders, including shaming them. A final type of physical intimidation involved displays and troop arrays meant to instill fear in the enemy.

Ancient Near Eastern soldiers endured tremendous hardships and the strong possibility of death from disease or warfare. One of the most important aspects of

psychological warfare was to rally the troops through exhortations or actions performed by a commander or a religious figure. These speeches or rituals assured the troops that their deities would support them in battle. The speeches and rituals also developed a sense of community among the troops. Developing a sense of community was an especially important issue to Assyria and other nations who relied heavily upon mercenary forces.

We also examined divine intervention in ancient Neart Eastern warfare. We found that battles were perceived to be battles between the deities of the opposing nations, and that victories were typically attributed to a nation's deity. The deities were portrayed with a vague supernatural impact upon the battle rather than a physical role in defeating the enemy.

Having examined the uses of psychological warfare in the ancient Near East outside of the land of Israel we now turn our attention to the use of psychological warfare in ancient Israel. As this dissertation changes focus from the ancient Near East to ancient Israel many similarities and some basic differences will be evident between the two entities.

III.

PROPAGANDA IN THE HEBREW BIBLE

1. Introduction

Propaganda, information used to affect opinions or outcomes, optimally results in winning a confrontation without fighting physically - a bloodless battle, or a war of words. Throughout history, governmental and military leaders representing cultures throughout the world preferred that the opposition surrender rather than engage in battle. They would avoid combat by one of two methods, either by mounting such a surprising show of force that the enemy would have no choice but to surrender, or by seeking to come to terms to prevent a physical altercation, with one side typically entering into a vassal status.[75]

McLaurin stated that the key issue in any type of warfare is power - whether physical, as in direct combat, or psychological, as in propaganda.

> Among writers and students of international relations, it has become standard practice to use 'power' as the central concept of that field and to accept the optimization of power as the objective of foreign policy. Although definitions of power vary somewhat from one authority to the next, most analysts seem to conceive of and use power as influence over other states, 'influence over the minds of men,' and the like. Whatever the degree of influence, the process by which it is achieved involves communication, specifically persuasive communications, to the extent the 'message' is willful and purposive. (McLaurin 275)

McLaurin gave further definition to 'persuasive communications', "Several different types of factors enter into the process of persuasive communications –

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[75] "This implies that an army will fight a pitched battle only if it can match swords with the opposing force in conditions of dynamic warfare and estimates that it will have a reasonable chance of success. If there is no such chance, it will avoid a direct confrontation on the battlefield and will compel the adversary to wage war in another way" (Eph'al 1984, 92).

principally source, content, medium, and audience factors" (McLaurin 276). Later he noted that the content of the communication can be sent by either a message or an action, and that any action that can be perceived by the enemy is sending a message (McLaurin 277).

I have classified propaganda in the Hebrew Bible into one of three types – diplomacy, threats and taunts, and advance word - statements or rumors which are spread about the ferocity or capabilities of one people to cause fear in another people. Diplomacy in the ancient Near East resulted in treaties and covenants between two or more parties with stipulations affecting both parties.

2. Diplomacy – bloodless battle through treaties and covenants

Although diplomacy was typically an attempt to bring about peaceful conflict resolution, there was always an underlying element of threat involved, because the next steps after diplomatic treaties were threats and physical intimidation. Suzerainty treaties involved a superior authority, a 'suzerain' in ancient Near Eastern terminology, who was usually offering peace to another ruler who would then become a vassal, thereby allowing the suzerain to avoid the expense and turmoil of battle (Coogan 116). Sometimes a weaker force would offer a treaty to the superior force to avoid a battle and possible annihilation. Regardless of how the treaty was proposed it was an opportunity for both sides to get something from the other side without overt battle.[76]

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[76] "Siege warfare, which necessarily drew into its orbit the entire non-combatant population of the besieged town, was governed by a strict rule: before any hostile action, 'peace' was offered in return for surrender to the besieging army. If this offer was refused, the town's adult male population was liable to death and its property to confiscation" (Herzog 222).

In the case of a suzerain-vassal treaty the vassal received safety and the suzerain received tribute in the form of goods, labor or money from the vassal. In parity treaties, between two equals, the two parties formed an alliance, vowed to support each other in times of battle and often exchanged gifts (Coogan 116).

We will explore several instances of diplomacy in the Hebrew Bible, which are categorized as relational diplomacy (including trickery) and political treaties. These types of diplomacy vary in their causation and enactment.[77]

Relational diplomacy

Not all treaties and pacts related to the machinations of war. Sometimes two parties decided to have a formal friendship without the specter of imminent battle hanging over the proceedings. Yet even in relational diplomacy there was still an underlying understanding that relationships were fragile and agreements were tenuous.

In Genesis 26 the Biblical author portrays a story of relational intrigue between Abimelech the Philistine king of Gerar and Abraham's son Isaac. Isaac chose to move to Gerar because of a great famine. Their relationship began on a rocky footing when Isaac told Abimelech that his wife Rebekah was his 'sister' only and Abimelech took her into his harem. Abimelech found out that she was Isaac's wife, as well as a close female relative, and Abimelech was angered that Isaac was not more forthcoming. While living in Gerar, Isaac planted crops and raised herds and was successful. Some of the Philistines stopped up his wells and Abimelech asked Isaac to leave Gerar. Isaac moved

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[77] For further information about ancient Near Eastern and Israelite treaties see, Hayim Tadmor "Treaty and Oath in the Ancient Near East", pp. 127-152, in H*umanizing America's Iconic Book,* editors, Gene M. Tucker and Douglas A. Knight, SBL Centennial Publications, 1982. See also Moshe Weinfeld "Covenant Terminology in the Ancient Near East and its Influence on the West". *JAOS* 93: 190-199.

out into the wadi of Gerar where he eventually settled in with his family and his herds.

Later, Abimelech came out of Gerar to meet with Isaac:

> And Abimelech came to him from Gerar, with Ahuzzath his councilor and Phicol chief of his troops. Isaac said to them, "Why have you come to me, seeing that you have been hostile to me and have driven me away from you?" And they said, "We now see plainly that the LORD has been with you, and we thought: Let there be a sworn treaty between our two parties, between you and us. Let us make a pact with you that you will not do us harm, just as we have not molested you but have always dealt kindly with you and sent you away in peace. From now on, be you blessed of the LORD!" Then he made for them a feast, and they ate and drank. Early in the morning, they exchanged oaths. Isaac then bade them farewell, and they departed from him in peace.[78] (Gen 26:26-31)

In verse 28 two different terms are used to describe the proposed treaty between

Abimelech and Isaac 'sworn treaty' אלה and 'pact' ברית . אלה means to "take an oath of

covenant" (Brown 46). כרת ברית means to "cut, or make a covenant . . . the cutting up

and distribution of the flesh of the victim for eating in the sacrifice of the covenant"

(Brown 503). This treaty was sealed with a feast (משתה), an overnight stay and oaths

(שבע). "In the ancient world, treaty-making often was accompanied by a ceremonial meal,

the purpose of which was to create an auspicious atmosphere of harmony and fellowship

for the pact to go into effect" (Sarna, 188).

Nothing was exchanged and there was no imminent threat of war - it was more

like establishing a friendship. Ambrose, a 4th century Christian writer, opined about

Isaac's probity displayed throughout the interactions with Abimelech and the other

Philistines. "Isaac was certainly a good and virtuous man, devoted to God and faithful to

his wife. He did not return evil for evil. He yielded to those who drove him out, but he

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[78] All Hebrew Bible quotes are taken from the *JPS Hebrew-English Tanakh,* Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society. 1999.

received them again when they were sorry, being neither harsh to insolence nor obdurate to kindness" (Sheridan 167).

In Genesis 32 we find the story of Isaac's sons Esau and Jacob establishing a relational treaty between themselves. The Biblical author wrote that they had been estranged since Jacob stole Esau's birthright and blessing, and then left to work for their uncle Laban. Years later, when leaving Laban, Jacob sent word to Esau in Edom about what he was doing. Jacob heard that Esau was coming to him with 400 men. Jacob assumed that Esau was still angry and was coming to exact revenge, so Jacob sent ahead gifts, women and children to try to soften Esau's heart. Their interaction is recorded in these verses:

> And he [Esau] asked, "What do you mean by all this company which I have met?" He [Jacob] answered, "To gain my lord's favor." Esau said, "I have enough, my brother; let what you have remain yours." But Jacob said, "No, I pray you; if you would do me this favor, accept from me this gift; for to see your face is like seeing the face of God, and you have received me favorably. Please accept my present which has been brought to you, for God has favored me and I have plenty." And when he urged him, he accepted. (Gen 33:8-11)

Esau was congenial to Jacob and they went their separate ways in peace. Sarna noted that in verse 9 Esau responded to Jacob, "let what you have remain yours" perhaps signifying that he no longer was seeking to reclaim his birthright (Sarna 230), and also that in verse 11 Esau accepted Jacob's gifts but did not give anything in return, "Esau did not reciprocate, thereby intimating that what takes place is the settlement of an old score, not an exchange of civilities" (ibid.). Perhaps Esau intended to come in peace, or perhaps Jacob's gifts softened Esau's heart.

In 1 Samuel 25 another Biblical story of relational diplomacy involved the rogue warrior David and Abigail, the wife of a wealthy landowner, Nabal. As the Biblical

author unfolded this story David intimated to Nabal that he was protecting Nabal and in exchange would like food for his men, Nabal rebuffed David and greatly upset David. Abigail appeased David with soothing words and gifts of food for him and his men.

> When Abigail saw David, she quickly dismounted from the ass and threw herself face down before David, bowing to the ground. Prostrate at his feet, she pleaded, "Let the blame be mine, my lord, but let your handmaid speak to you; hear your maid's plea. Please, my lord, pay no attention to that wretched fellow Nabal. For he is just what his name says: His name means 'boor' and he is a boor. "Your handmaid did not see the young men whom my lord sent. I swear, my lord, as the LORD lives and as you live—the LORD who has kept you from seeking redress by blood with your own hands—let your enemies and all who would harm my lord fare like Nabal! Here is the present which your maidservant has brought to my lord; let it be given to the young men who are the followers of my lord. Please pardon your maid's boldness. For the LORD will grant my lord an enduring house, because my lord is fighting the battles of the LORD, and no wrong is ever to be found in you. (1 Sam 25:23-28)

David accepted her gifts and he agreed not to attack Nabal and his belongings. Ambrose, felt that Abigail's intervention kept David from committing murder, thereby sinning in his anger and having blood on his hands (Franke 311). The next day Abigail told Nabal what happened, he 'became like a stone' and died ten days later. Shortly thereafter David proposed marriage to Abigail and married her. McCarter saw this marriage as another step in David's ascension to the throne. "Now we find him marrying the widow of a high-ranking member of the clan that controlled Hebron as well as another woman from nearby Jezreel. He is becoming a prominent figure in the heartland of Judah" (402).

Relational treaties were established between two non-warring factions and were intended to establish relational bonds between the two parties. These next relational

treaties also fall into the category of trickery. Diplomatic trickery is the presentation of a false motive for diplomatic relations followed by the revelation of the true intent at an opportune time.

Trickery

The first Biblical portrayal of diplomatic trickery occurred between the men of Shechem and two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi. Shechem, the city's namesake, had raped their sister Dinah. Shechem's father, Hamor, offered a treaty to Simeon and Levi with the understanding that Shechem would marry Dinah and their peoples would intermarry. Simeon and Levi were trying to get revenge for their sister's rape and offered treaty terms that made it easy for them to break the treaty and get revenge.

> Jacob's sons answered Shechem and his father Hamor—speaking with guile because he had defiled their sister Dinah— and said to them, "We cannot do this thing, to give our sister to a man who is uncircumcised, for that is a disgrace among us. Only on this condition will we agree with you; that you will become like us in that every male among you is circumcised. Then we will give our daughters to you and take your daughters to ourselves; and we will dwell among you and become as one kindred. But if you will not listen to us and become circumcised, we will take our daughter and go. (Gen 34:13-17)

The Biblical author depicts that Shechem eventually decided to accept these terms and in doing so fell into the trap of Simeon and Levi. "All who went out of the gate of his town heeded Hamor and his son Shechem, and all males, all those who went out of the gate of his town, were circumcised. On the third day, when they were in pain, Simeon and Levi, two of Jacob's sons, brothers of Dinah, took each his sword, came upon the city unmolested, and slew all the males" (Gen 34:24-25).

This treaty truly was psychological warfare, the Shechemites were given a false sense of security by Simeon and Levi and they ended up making themselves vulnerable

as a result. The prominent emphasis upon the phallus added extra psychosexual tension to this story of psychological warfare.[79]

Where Simeon and Levi used diplomatic trickery to destroy the Shechemites, in Joshua 9 the author describes diplomacy which avoided war altogether. Joshua and the Israelites had destroyed Jericho and Ai, and the kings along the Mediterranean Sea coast gathered to battle them. As other nations were seeking to battle Israel the Gibeonites chose to trick Joshua into a treaty with them. The Rabbinic writer Radak opined "Like the people of Jericho and Ai before them, the Gibeonites chose to resist the Israelite conquest, but in a different manner. Jericho chose defense; Ai chose offense; the Gibeonites chose deception" (Scherman 537). Their emissaries presented themselves as travelers from a distant land and Joshua agreed to a treaty with them. When Joshua and the chieftains of Israel realized what the Gibeonites had done they honored the treaty, but subjugated the Gibeonites as hewers of wood and drawers of water. Rabbinic author Abravanel states that "After the division of the land, when each tribe settled in its own territory, they were to remain slaves of the sanctuary" (Oratz 69).

Relational treaties, with or without trickery, were established between parties under the guise of establishing amicable relations. Some treaties were made between two political entities to establish the ascendancy of one of the parties, or to avert war.

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[79] "In this way, they employ trickery involving the seat of the male reproductive power to despoil those who had despoiled their sister. The tale's irony is grounded in themes of sexuality and vengeance. Sexual control, moreover, is a political matter. The brothers have restored the honor of Jacob's household and repossessed the woman, thereby rejecting the Shechemite overtures that would eliminate the difference between Israelite and Other, a contrast essential to the author's self-definition." (Niditch 109)

<u>Political treaties</u>

The story found in 1 Samuel 11:1-11 contains all the forms of psychological warfare noted in my typology.[80] The author represented Jabesh-Gilead offering Nahash a political treaty which he accepted with an element of physical intimidation as one of the conditions of the treaty. 1 Samuel 11:2 states, "I will make a pact [כרת ברית] with you on this condition, that everyone's right eye be gouged out; I will make this a humiliation for all Israel." Scherman noted, "Nahash wanted the mutilation to testify to the helplessness of the nation. If so, the people of Jabesh argued, give us time to appeal for help. A failure to respond to us will indeed be the 'sign of shame' you desire" (Scherman 668). When Saul heard of this he rallied the Israelite forces to march against Nahash and save Jabesh-Gilead.[81]

Our next example of a political treaty also required a steep price in return for peace. The author of 2 Samuel 20:15-22 writes that King David sent Joab to squash a rebellion which was being fomented by Sheba. Joab pursued Sheba and eventually cornered and besieged him in Abel of Beth-maacah. Then a clever woman shouted from within the city for Joab to approach the walls and negotiate, "Listen! Listen! Tell Joab to come over here so I can talk to him" (2 Samuel 20:16). She calls out:

> "I am one of those who seek the welfare of the faithful in Israel. But you seek to bring death upon a mother city in Israel! Why should you destroy the LORD`s possession?" Joab replied, "Far be it, far be it from me to destroy or to ruin! Not at all! But a certain man from the hill country of Ephraim, named Sheba son of Bichri, has rebelled against King David. Just hand him alone over to us, and I will

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[80] See the further treatment of the story of Nahash in this dissertation on pages 86-87, 90-91, 150-151 and 174.

[81] Saul's dismemberment of oxen to rally his troops is treated further in this dissertation on page 150-151 and 174.

withdraw from the city." The woman assured Joab, "His head shall be thrown over the wall to you." The woman came to all the people with her clever plan; and they cut off the head of Sheba son of Bichri and threw it down to Joab. He then sounded the horn; all the men dispersed to their homes, and Joab returned to the king in Jerusalem. (2 Sam 20:19-22)

The woman brokered a deal which brought about the death of one rebel but saved the lives of hundreds of people.

Treaties were intended to be lasting covenants between two leaders and their nations, but at times they were just an expedient way to gain an advantage over an opponent. In the story related in 2 Chronicles 16 both Asa king of Judah and Baasha king of Israel maintained pacts with Ben-hadad of Aram. The Biblical author depicts that when Baasha restricted the trade routes in and out of Judah by building up Ramah, Asa sent Ben-hadad silver and gold from the temple and the palace and asked him to break his pact with Baasha.[82] Ben-hadad agreed to do so and he routed Baasha back to Israel. Obviously these treaties were tenuous and easily dissolved. Baasha was practicing psychological warfare by encroaching on Asa's territory and Asa responded by paying to help dissolve Baasha's alliance with Ben-hadad. The author of this passage indicates that although the conflict was between Asa and Baasha, they never actually battled at all. We later learn that Asa capitalized on Baasha's defeat, "Then King Asa mustered all Judah, and they carried away the stones and timber with which Baasha had built up Ramah; with these King Asa built up Geba and Mizpah" (2 Chr 16:6).

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[82] "There is a pact between me and you, as there was between my father and your father. I herewith send you silver and gold; go and break your pact with King Baasha of Israel so that he may withdraw from me" (2 Chr 16:3).

Diplomacy, relational or political, involving treaties or trickery, was intended to avoid battle if possible. After diplomacy, the next step in psychological warfare was threats.

3. Threats and taunts – a war of words

One employs threat to force the one being threatened to decide whether to enter into battle or not. Threat is either a last bluff, (a show of bravado to avert war), or a last stand, (a description of what the threatener believed would happen if the recipient did not acquiesce).   The threatener may or may not have believed that he could deliver on his threat, which was not truly the issue; what mattered was if the one being threatened believed the threat.

The first kind of threat we will examine came about when ancient Israel was struggling and they needed assistance. When the Israelites sought a favor from another nation at times the other nation threatened them rather than offering to assist them.

Threats related to requests for assistance

As the author of the book of Numbers' presented the story of the Israelites wandering in the wilderness he wrote that two nations would not let them pass through their lands – the Edomites and the Amorites (Num 20-21). In both instances Moses promised that they would pass through the land without harming anyone or anything, but both nations refused. The Edomites also threatened Israel with armed resistance. Numbers 21 depicted the Amorites not only refusing a similar request, but their king, Sihon, also led his troops into battle against Israel. Verbal threats may have accompanied Sihon's physical threat although they are not recorded here. The result of Sihon's threat: "But Israel put them to the sword, and took possession of their land …" (Num 21:24).

Another request for assistance depicted in Judges 8 brought about threats. In hot pursuit of the Midianite kings Zebah and Zalmunna, Gideon is portrayed asking the people of Succoth to give his men some bread, they refused. "But the officials of Succoth replied, 'are Zebah and Zalmunna already in your hands, that we should give bread to your troops?' 'I swear', declared Gideon, 'when the LORD delivers Zebah and Zalmunna into my hands, I'll thresh your bodies upon desert thorns and briers!'" (Judg 8:6-7). Soggin observed, "The inhabitants of Succoth, and, shortly after, those of Penuel, evidently thought that Gideon's enterprise had by no means come to a favourable end, and indeed that it might be doomed to failure" (Soggin 149). Gideon's threatening words hung on them like a curse, and when he finally did come back from completing his improbable victory the people of Succoth were probably scared to the point of being able to offer little or no resistence.[83]

Political threats typically involved trying to reach resolution with an enemy without the threat of imminent of war. Political threats were meant to expose weaknesses which could be exploited if battle ensued.

Political threats and taunts

In Judges 11 the Biblical author wrote that Gilead convinced Jephthah, the exiled illegitimate son of the region's namesake, to lead it against an Ammonite threat. The Ammonites maintained that Israel took their land hundreds of years before. Jephthah's response was that when their ancestors would not aid Israel they had forfeited the land. (Judg 11: 23-24). Jephthah asserted that if Chemosh their god cared about them, or was

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[83] For further treatment of this passage see page 97 in this dissertation.

stronger than Israel's god, then Ammon would not be in this situation. "Divine promises

to each side are thus reflected in recognized borders as they now stand" (Niditch 126).

In the next two instances of political threats the author indicated that David had

the opportunity to kill King Saul if he desired, but in both instances he instead mocked

Saul's ineptitude with actions and words.[84] David, once a warrior loyal to King Saul,

became hated by Saul who hunted David and his men. In one instance, while chasing

after David, Saul stopped to relieve himself in a cave, the very cave where David and his

men were hiding. David cut off the כנף "skirt, corner, or flowing end" (Brown 489) of

Saul's robe while he was indisposed, and later called out to Saul while showing him the

piece of cloth cut from Saul's garment. The author wrote that David challenged Saul,

> Please, sir, take a close look at the corner of your cloak in my hand; for when I cut
> off the corner of your cloak, I did not kill you. You must see plainly that I have
> done nothing evil or rebellious, and I have never wronged you. Yet you are bent
> on taking my life. May the LORD judge between you and me! And may He take
> vengeance upon you for me, but my hand will never touch you (1 Sam 24:12-13).

Such a threat of divine action clearly carried more weight than an act of David himself.

The second time David is pictured sparing Saul's life David surreptitiously

entered the place where Saul and his entourage were sleeping and took Saul's spear and

water jar. David belittled Saul's general, Abner, and his troops.

> You are a man, aren't you? And there is no one like you in Israel! So why didn't
> you keep watch over your lord the king? For one of [our] troops came to do
> violence to your lord the king. You have not given a good account of yourself! As
> the LORD lives, [all of] you deserve to die, because you did not keep watch over
> your lord, the LORD's anointed. Look around, where are the king's spear and
> water jar that were at his head? (1 Sam 26:15-16)

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[84] See pages 106-107 in this dissertation for further treatment of this passage.

In both instances David was proclaiming that he did not intend to harm Saul, but his words and actions were belittling and threatening psychological warfare. The hunters (Saul and Abner) could conceivably become the hunted.

The story found in 2 Chronicles 10 presents a tense political situation between Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, and Jeroboam who was exiled to Shishak in Egypt during the last years of Solomon's reign. Jeroboam threatened to pull the northern tribes out of the nation if Rehoboam did not lighten the load of labor and taxes his father imposed upon the Israelites. Rehoboam's threatening response was obviously that of a weak man trying to sound tough.[85]

> And the young men who had grown up with him answered, "Speak thus to the people who said to you, 'Your father made our yoke heavy, now you make it lighter for us.' Say to them, 'My little finger is thicker than my father's loins. My father imposed a heavy yoke on you, and I will add to your yoke; my father flogged you with whips, but I [will do so] with scorpions.'" (2 Chron 10:10-11)

When the negotiations between Rehoboam and the Jeroboam fell through, the Biblical author wrote that the northern tribes seceded. Gabriel believes that Shishak was behind Jereboam's return to Israel. "Shishak sent Jeroboam back to Israel sometime after Solomon's death to exploit the break between the new king and the tribal leaders. (…) The result was civil war" (Gabriel 2003, 302-303). Five years later Shishak took advantage of the division in Israel and captured towns in both the north and the south.

> "The goal of Shishak's invasion was to reestablish Egyptian suzerainty over the coastal plain and to break the stranglehold over the commercial routes that Israel had maintained for more than 40 years. Shishak sought to sever the commercial relationship between Tyre and Israel that had shut Egypt out of the important northern trade" (Gabriel 2003, 303).

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[85] Rehoboam's son, Abijah admits Rehoboam's weakness in 2 Chronicles 13, which is treated on page 74-75 of this dissertation.

Political threats included the specter of possible future military action. Military threats forbode immediate consequences if the threatener's conditions were not met.

Military threats and taunts

Military threats were the final step before conventional battle. When King Saul's son Jonathan attacked and defeated a Philistine outpost (1 Sam 14) threats were exchanged before blows were exchanged. Jonathan and his arms-bearer approached the Philistine outpost. The Philistine soldiers taunted them, but their threats did not dissuade Jonathan and a deadly skirmish ensued, which Jonathan won.[86]

The story of the battle between David and Goliath depicted in 1 Samuel 17 is filled with threats. The author wrote that Goliath came out onto the battlefield each day taunting the Israelites to send out their best warrior to fight him.

> And the Philistine called out to David, "Am I a dog that you come against me with sticks?' The Philistine cursed David by his gods; and the Philistine said to David, "Come here, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the sky and the beasts of the field." David replied to the Philistine, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin; but I come against you in the name of the LORD of Hosts, the God of the ranks of Israel, whom you have defied. This very day the LORD will deliver you into my hands. I will kill you and cut off your head; and I will give the carcasses of the Philistine camp to the birds of the sky and the beasts of the earth. All the earth shall know that there is a God in Israel. And this whole assembly shall know that the LORD can give victory without sword or spear. For the battle is the LORD`s, and He will deliver you into our hands." (1 Sam 17:43-47)

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[86] Sulpicius Severus, an early Christian writer summed up the scene, "In these circumstances [with few weapons and Saul's fearful army], Jonathan, with an audacious design and with his armor bearer as his only companion, entered the camp of the enemy, and having slain about twenty of them, [he] spread a terror throughout the whole army. And then, through the appointment of God, taking themselves to flight, they neither carried out orders nor kept their ranks but placed all the hope of safety in flight. Saul, perceiving this, hastily, drew forth his men, and pursuing the fugitives, obtained a victory" (Franke 248).

"Goliath attempts to put David in his place, to gain the psychological advantage by implying David has no chance against him, that it is an insult even to face such an opponent in combat (…) Goliath also implies that the warrior deserves to be met by his equal -- a role the inexperienced David does not appear to suit" (Niditch 94). This story ends with David defeating Goliath and the Israelites soundly defeating the Philistines, which is the opposite result of Goliath's threats.[87]

In 2 Samuel 2 we find the story of a well-intentioned threat. The author wrote that following King Saul's death his military commander, Abner, established Saul's son Ish-Bosheth as the king of Israel instead of David. David was king of Judah, but eventually there was a battle between the forces of Judah and Israel. David's general, Joab, and his troops routed Abner and Israel's troops and chased after them. Joab's brother, Asahel, ran after Abner to kill him. Abner tried to dissuade Joab's brother Asahel from running after him.[88] "Abner said to him, 'Turn to the right or to the left, and seize one of our boys and strip off his tunic.' But Asahel would not leave off. Abner again begged Asahel, 'Stop pursuing me, or I'll have to strike you down. How will I look your brother Joab in the face?'" (1 Sam 2:21-22). Unfortunately, Asahel would not listen to Abner who then killed Asahel to save his own life.

In another Biblical portrayal of military threat, David decided to attack Jerusalem, and the Jebusites, as the first official act of his kingship. The Jebusites doubted David's

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[87] For further treatment of this passage see pages 104 and 153 in this dissertation.

[88] "An implicit soldierly camaraderie and respect between peers trained for the same career and a sense of fair play are seen in this portrayal. The lad Asahel is no match for the more experienced Abner. Again a certain noble gamesmanship is found. But the impetuous youth will not abandon his pursuit and Abner kills him" (Niditch 95).
See page 92-93 in this dissertation for further discussion of this passage.

political and military capabilities and taunted him. Their taunt about the blind and lame

turning him back was meant to make David rethink his plan to attack Jerusalem (2 Sam

5:6).[89] Their taunt did not dissuade David nor did it cause him to panic. Instead he is

shown calmly assessing what their major weakness was – the water channel leading into

the city – and then he turned their own words upon them as he rallied his troops to kill the

"lame and the blind, who are hateful to David" (2 Sam 5:8).[90]

2 Chronicles 13 showed Abijah, son of Rehoboam king of Judah, threatening

Jeroboam king of Israel that YHWH would side with Judah in battle. Abijah sought to

reclaim the territory Reheboam had ceded to Jeroboam. He advanced upon Jereboam in

Ephraim saying:

> Listen to me, Jeroboam and all Israel. Surely you know that the Lord God of
> Israel gave David kingship over Israel forever—to him and his sons—by a
> covenant of salt. Jeroboam son of Nebat had been in the service of Solomon son
> of David, but he rose up and rebelled against his master. Riffraff and scoundrels
> gathered around him and pressed hard upon Rehoboam son of Solomon.
> Rehoboam was inexperienced and fainthearted and could not stand up to them.
> Now you are bent on opposing the kingdom of the LORD, which is in the charge
> of the sons of David, because you are a great multitude and possess the golden
> calves that Jeroboam made for you as gods. Did you not banish the priests of the
> LORD, the sons of Aaron and the Levites, and, like the peoples of the land,
> appoint your own priests? Anyone who offered himself for ordination with a
> young bull of the herd and seven rams became a priest of no-gods! As for us, the
> LORD is our God, and we have not forsaken Him. The priests who minister to the

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[89] "Perhaps the most imaginative explanation of these verses is the one
conjectured by G. [Ralbag]. He claims that there were two huge statues attached to the
gates at the entrance of the fortress, on sculptured in the shape of a blind man and the
other of a lame individual whose walking canes were iron rods energized by a rapid water
flow. These were so constructed that they waved viciously at anyone attempting entry
into the city" (Sosevsky 1981, 283).

[90] An alternate understanding of this passage could be that David was reminding
that the חרם (ban) applied to the city and the Israelite forces needed to strike at the
'windpipe' of the Jebusites and annihilate them, leaving no one 'lame and blind' behind.
See McCarter 1984, 137-140) for further illucidation of this passage.

> LORD are the sons of Aaron, and the Levites are at their tasks. They offer burnt offerings in smoke each morning and each evening, and the aromatic incense, the rows of bread on the pure table; they kindle the golden lampstand with its lamps burning each evening, for we keep the charge of the LORD our God, while you have forsaken it. See, God is with us as our chief, and His priests have the trumpets for sounding blasts against you. O children of Israel, do not fight the LORD God of your fathers, because you will not succeed. (2 Chr 13:4-12)

While Abijah was speaking Jeroboam sent an ambush to attack Judah, this tactic was brilliant, but despite this ploy Israel was defeated, as Abijah had predicted.

This next Biblical portrayal of military threat was not understood as a threat initially. In 1 Kings 20, Ben-Hadad king of Aram gathered a coalition of kings and besieged Samaria, then he threatened Ahab king of Israel when he declared, "Your silver and gold are mine, and your beautiful wives and children are mine" (1 Kgs 20:3). Ahab's reply was rather formulaic and nonchalant, very much what a vassal would have replied to his suzerain, "As you say, my lord king: I and all I have are yours" (1 Kgs 20:4). Ahab did not understand Ben-hadad's proclamation as a threat but rather a statement of fact. Ben-hadad's messengers recognized that Ahab did not feel threatened, they left Ahab and presumably asked Ben-hadad what to do next. When the messengers came back they now had a much clearer message for Ahab, "When I sent you the order to give me your silver and gold, and your wives and children, I meant that tomorrow at this time I will send my servants to you and they will search your house and the houses of your courtiers and seize everything you prize" (1 Kgs 20:5-6). This time Ahab figured out that Ben-hadad was coming to rob him and humiliate him.   Ahab called a meeting of his elders and asked for their advice, they told him not to give in. Ahab and Ben-hadad jousted verbally:

> "Tell my lord the king: All that you first demanded of your servant I shall do, but this thing I cannot do." The messengers went and reported this to him. Thereupon

> Ben-hadad sent him this message: "May the gods do thus to me and even more, if the dust of Samaria will provide even a handful for each of the men who follow me!" The king of Israel replied, "Tell him: Let not him who girds on his sword boast like him who ungirds it!" (1 Kgs 20:9-11)

In the final statement Ahab is initimating that Ben-hadad may strap his sword on for himself in the morning, but someone else will take it off him that evening, because he will be dead.

The Biblical author wrote that Ahab attacked Ben-hadad and the other kings in his alliance at midday while they were getting drunk. Ahab's attack surprised the Aramean coalition and their troops scattered. Ben-hadad regrouped the coalition troops and received this infamous advice in regard to engaging the Israelites in battle, "Their God is a God of mountains; that is why they got the better of us. But if we fight them in the plain, we will surely get the better of them" (1 Kgs 20:23). The two armies encamped opposite each other for seven days, the smaller Israelite force and the much larger Aramean coalition of 33 kings. Eventually Ahab defeated Ben-hadad and his coalition.[91]

> During the eight days of watching his enemy Ahab had ample time to reconnoitre those outflanking approaches and to make up the assault parties that could turn the Damascene flank. It could be that Ahab had perfected his plans earlier but waited for over a week in order to exert psychological pressure on the Aramean soldiers, who, keyed up the whole time to counter any suspicious move through the defile, must have become jumpy or less alert by the end of the week. (Herzog 157)

Sometimes threats were based on overconfidence in one's own troops or underestimation of an opposing force. "Relative optimism is related to, though not quite the same as over-confidence. The former compares the contenders' beliefs with one another; the latter compares their beliefs with the actual truth" (Hirshleifer 459). The

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[91] See page 139 of this dissertation for further discussion of this passage.

author of 2 Kings 14 wrote that when Judean king Amaziah defeated Edom,[92] he began to

threaten Jehoash, the king of Israel

> He defeated ten thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt, and he captured Sela in battle and renamed it Joktheel, as is still the case. Then Amaziah sent envoys to King Jehoash son of Jehoahaz son of Jehu of Israel, with this message: "Come, let us confront each other." King Jehoash of Israel sent back this message to King Amaziah of Judah: "The thistle in Lebanon sent this message to the cedar in Lebanon, 'Give your daughter to my son in marriage.' But a wild beast in Lebanon went by and trampled down the thistle. Because you have defeated Edom, you have become arrogant. Stay home and enjoy your glory, rather than provoke disaster and fall, dragging Judah down with you." (2 Kgs 14:7-10)

Jehoash presented a level-headed and confident stance in the midst of this

interaction. Amaziah, overconfident in his army, would not relent. Jehoash invaded

Judah and brought his troops to Beth-shemesh where his army soundly defeated Judah.[93]

Amaziah's threats were baseless and ultimately harmful to Judah.

In 2 Kings 18-19 the Biblical author depicts perhaps the most ingenious military

threat recorded in the Bible.[94] This interaction between Sennacherib's commander, the

Rabshakeh, and the representatives of Hezekiah king of Judah provides a perfect example

of the use of propaganda in psychological warfare. Gallagher compared Rabshakeh's

speech to Second World War propaganda and concludes:

> Our study has shown that the first speech has several attributes typical of this type of propaganda: the claim to have overwhelmingly superior forces, the recklessness of the enemy strategy, frequent use of rhetorical questions, using the enemy's own language and expressions, flaunting one's knowledge about the

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[92] See page 95 of this dissertation for further treatment of Amaziah's defeat of Edom.

[93] For further treatment of Jehoash's defeat, and humiliation, of Amaziah see page 95 in this dissertation.

[94] Cf. 2 Chronicles 32 and Isaiah 36. For further treatment of this passage see pages 139 of this dissertation.

enemy, responding to the enemy view. This does not prove that an Assyrian originally made the speech, but if one or more Judeans composed it, they clearly understood the features of this type of propaganda and were brilliant story tellers. (Gallagher 197-198)

In the Biblical story the Rabshakeh laid siege to Jerusalem and he called out discouraging words to those gathered in the city in "Judean". The city officials asked for him to use Aramaic so that the Jerusalemites would not understand what was being said but he refused, wanting to scare the people and thereby force the city's submission. "The Bible mentions one item of psychological warfare used by the invaders that strikes us as rather modern: the Assyrian harangue of the besieged Jerusalemites in Hebrew. In a succession of arguments - using terror, ridicule, promises, slanted information and 'logical' proof of the futility of it all - the Assyrians tried to break the defenders' will to resist" (Herzog 253).

> "Was it to your master and to you that my master sent me to speak those words? It was precisely to the men who are sitting on the wall—who will have to eat their dung and drink their urine with you." And the Rabshakeh stood and called out in a loud voiced in Judean: "Hear the words of the Great King, the King of Assyria. Thus said the king:
>> Don't let Hezekiah deceive you, for he will not be able to deliver you from my hands. Don't let Hezekiah make you rely on the LORD saying: The LORD will surely save us: this city will not fall into the hands of the king of Assyria.
>> Don't listen to Hezekiah. For thus said the king of Assyria: Make your peace with me and come out to me, so that you may all eat from your vines and your fig trees and drink water from your cisterns, until I come and take you away to a land like your own, a land of grain [fields] and vineyards, of bread and wine, of olive oil and honey, so that you may live and not die.
>> Don't listen to Hezekiah, who misleads you by saying, 'The LORD will save us.' Did any of the gods of other nations save his land from the king of Assyria? Where were the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where were the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena and Ivvah? [And] did they save Samaria from me? Which among all the gods of [those] countries saved their countries from me?" (2 Kgs 18:27-35)

The Rabshakeh's taunts to Jerusalem focused on intimidating the citizenry of Jerusalem as much as the Judean officials. His three points were 1) Judah's alliance with

Egypt was like leaning on a splintered reed of a staff, which would only hurt Judah; 2) the people could not rely on YHWH because their reforming king, Hezekiah, removed the system of high places and YHWH shrines which were a normal part of Judah's worship. 3) he told them that YHWH sent him and he was simply following the orders from their god. How could they challenge the will of their own god? "In clever propaganda, delivered in a rhetorical tour de force, he tells those he hopes to defeat that their own God is against them" (Niditch 127).

Deijl (244) noted that the Rabshakeh may have been acting according to prophecy in Isaiah 10 where the author portrays YHWH saying, "Ha! Assyria, rod of My anger, in whose hand, as a staff, is My fury! I send him against an ungodly nation, I charge him against a people that provokes Me, to take its spoil and to seize its booty and to make it a thing trampled like the mire of the streets" (Isa 10:5-6). Then he says "Shall I not do to Jerusalem and her images what I did to Samaria and her idols" (Isa 10:11).

The Rabshakeh is portrayed speaking powerfully about the horrors of siege, the beneficence of the king of Assyria and the inability of the gods of other nations to save them from him. Deijl states, "This truly is a war of propaganda. It is YHWH's fame, as 'God of all kingdom of the earth' (19:15) versus the propaganda of the king of Assyria, who feels he possesses the power to destroy all lands utterly (19:11), with not one god being capable of saving his people" (264).

The author of 2 Chronicles 34 and 35 presented Josiah as a reformer who oversaw the destruction of foreign idols, idolatrous priests and high places. Josiah reinstituted Passover and the prominence of the book of the law of the Lord (2 Chron 34:14) in matters of religion and law. In 2 Chronicles 35:20 Pharaoh Necho advanced his army

northward toward Carchemish on the Euphrates River. Josiah intercepted Necho at

Megiddo intending to attack him. Necho tried to dissuade Josiah from attacking but he

would not relent. Necho, who felt he was under orders from Josiah's god, reluctantly

battled Josiah.

> [Necho] sent messengers to him, saying, "What have I to do with you, king of
> Judah? I do not march against you this day but against the kingdom that wars with
> me, and it is God's will that I hurry. Refrain, then, from interfering with God who
> is with me, that He not destroy you." But Josiah would not let him alone; instead,
> he donned [his armor] to fight him, heedless of Necho's words from the mouth of
> God; and he came to fight in the plain of Megiddo. Archers shot King Josiah, and
> the king said to his servants, "Get me away from here, for I am badly wounded."
> His servants carried him out of his chariot and put him in the wagon of his
> second-in-command, and conveyed him to Jerusalem. There he died, and was
> buried in the grave of his fathers, and all Judah and Jerusalem went into mourning
> over Josiah. (2 Chr 35:21-24)

Necho actually ended up looking like the righteous one in these interactions.

"Fantastically, the oracle from God is delivered by Neco himself to whom God has

spoken (2 Chron 35:21-22). The Chronicler does not pause to comment on the recurring

problem in biblical theodicy and prophecy concerning the identification of a true message

from God" (Niditch 142).

In Nehemiah 3 and 4 the Biblical author depicts Darius sending Nehemiah to

organize the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem. Nehemiah was operating under Darius'

authority to benefit the Jews in Judea. Those who did not want Jerusalem to return to

strength began to taunt Nehemiah and the other Jews.

> When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, it angered him, and he
> was extremely vexed. He mocked the Jews, saying in the presence of his brothers
> and the Samarian force, "What are the miserable Jews doing? Will they restore,
> offer sacrifice, and finish one day? Can they revive those stones out of the dust
> heaps, burned as they are?" Tobiah the Ammonite, alongside him, said, "That
> stone wall they are building—if a fox climbed it he would breach it!" (Neh 4:1-3)

Although this psychological warfare wore on the builders they built the wall to half its expected height (Neh 4:4-6), yet eventually it became evident that the mocking cloaked underlying threats (Neh 4:7-12). Huber noted what Sanballat and Tobiah were hoping to accomplish with their taunts:

> Sanballat's and Tobiah's ridiculing has a purpose. When people are ridiculed and shamed, particularly in the eyes of others, it restricts their ability to perform their task. It takes away their self-confidence. In this case they could become exactly what Sanballat and Tobiah suggest--weak and inadequate--so the threat of the shame of failure can further inhibit the efforts of the workers and achieve the desired incongruity. Thus the taunt is an attempt to control by sapping and diminishing the self-confidence and adequacy of the Jews and strengthening the position of the mockers by influencing the opinion of others. (Huber 89)

In Nehemiah 6 Nehemiah is shown gradually comprehending Sanballat's attempts to verbally intimidate him:

> [Sanballat speaking] "Word has reached the nations, and Geshema too that you and the Jews are planning to rebel—for which reason you are building the wall—and that you are to be their king. Such is the word. You have also set up prophets in Jerusalem to proclaim about you, 'There is a king in Judah!' Word of these things will surely reach the king; so come, let us confer together."
> I sent back a message to him, saying, "None of these things you mention has occurred; they are figments of your imagination"— for they all wished to intimidate us, thinking, "They will desist from the work, and it will not get done." Now strengthen my hands!
> Then I visited Shemaiah son of Delaiah son of Mehetabel when he was housebound, and he said, "Let us meet in the House of God, inside the sanctuary, And let us shut the doors of the sanctuary, for they are coming to kill you, By night they are coming to kill you."
> I replied, "Will a man like me take flight? Besides, who such as I can go into the sanctuary and live? I will not go in." Then I realized that it was not God who sent him, but that he uttered that prophecy about me—Tobiah and Sanballat having hired him— because he was a hireling, that I might be intimidated and act thus and commit a sin, and so provide them a scandal with which to reproach me *[brackets mine]* (Neh 6:6-13).

Our last portrayal of military threat comes from the last verses of Jeremiah 51. It is filled with symbolism of YHWH the warrior and the various weapons and tools at his

disposal.[95] In the story Seraiah, Jeremiah's associate, was told to go to Babylon and read

a scroll which Jeremiah had written, filled with prophecies against Babylon. Then

Seraiah was to say "O LORD, You Yourself have declared concerning this place that it

shall be cut off, without inhabitant, man or beast; that it shall be a desolation for all time"

(Jer 51:62). Then Seraiah was to tie a stone to the scroll and throw it in the Euphrates

River and say "Thus shall Babylon sink and never rise again, because of the disaster that

I will bring upon it. And [nations] shall have wearied themselves [for fire]" (Jer 51:64).

Thus far we examined the use of diplomacy and threats in psychological warfare.

These tools were used in an attempt to bring about resolution between two parties without

engaging in battle. The last kind of propaganda we will examine is advance word, the

idea of controlling the information which preceded you for greater influence upon your

enemy. Advance word could preclude battle or affect the outcome of a battle.

4. Advance word – espionage, counterintelligence, subterfuge and subversion

As part of an espionage program, opposing forces would not only spy on one

another, they would spread rumors or exaggerations about themselves and others; or they

would share misleading information about their battle plans to try to throw the other

forces off balance. The intent was to break the will of the other nation by instilling fear

or confusion in them. Some commanders would plant people in the enemy camp to

spread rumors and fear among the other army. These 'fifth columnists' were not sent to

gather information but to disseminate fear-inspiring or diversionary information. This

type of psychological warfare was a very sophisticated information and disinformation

campaign which had to be carefully planned, executed and controlled.

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[95] This passage is treated more fully on pages 169 in this dissertation.

Moses

In Numbers 14, the author wrote that YHWH was exhausted with the Israelites'
moaning and groaning. Moses sent twelve spies into the land of Canaan and of those
only two thought that the Israelites could take the land – Caleb and Joshua. The Israelites
became scared of the uncertainty of their situation and they began to long for a return to
their slavery in Egypt.

YHWH instructed Moses to wipe out the Israelites but thorugh Moses the author
expressed concern that the Egyptians would hear that the Israelites died and believe that
YHWH failed.   Moses was concerned about the reputations of Israel and YHWH. (Num
14:11-19)

Then in Numbers 22 the author portrayed an instance of advance word. The
Moabites heard that the Israelites defeated the Amorites and they were afraid of Israel.
"Balak son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites. Moab was alarmed
because that people was so numerous. Moab dreaded the Israelites, and Moab warned the
elders of Midian, 'Now this horde will lick clean all that is about us as an ox licks up the
grass of the field'" (Num 22:2-4).

Joshua

In the book of Joshua we find similar statements made about the advance of the
Israelites toward Canaan. The narrator depicts Canaanite complete awareness of Israel's
desert victories. He gives Rahab full knowledge about the exploits of the Israelites, and
states it in Deuteronomic terminology.

How did this information get to the inhabitants of Jericho? Cities like Jericho
certainly sent out spies to watch the Hebrew people, but they also could have been

infiltrated by Hebrew spies who spun the tale in a very dramatic fashion. "We may conclude that there had once circulated a more realistic account of the capture of Jericho, including an intelligence mission involving a 'fifth column' within the city" (Malamat 1978 13-14).

The fear mentioned above is reiterated in Joshua 2 as the spies are characterized reporting back to Joshua. "They said to Joshua, 'The LORD has delivered the whole land into our power; in fact, all the inhabitants of the land are quaking before us'" (Josh 2:24).

Joshua 5 portrays Canaanite kings in the area of Jericho as having heard that the Israelites were advancing toward Jericho and they were terrified. They heard of the miraculous Jordan River crossing and were fearful. But, rather than taking immediate advantage of this fear, YHWH commands circumcision of a new generation of Israelites. There were psychological reasons for this mass circumcision. First, it was a psychological boost to the Israelites. Initiation into the ancient Abrahamic covenant created a bond with Israel's past. They made peace with their ancestors and with YHWH. Second, it sent a message to the nations around them. The advance word was that the Israelites were a fierce people with a powerful god. Circumcision was a powerful signal to both Israel and her Canaanite foe.

The unconventional way that the author describes Jericho's decimation certainly reflects a legend of the Israelites' military prowess.

> Accordingly, the purpose of this mission was to see the land, but primarily Jericho, a fortified city situated on the boundary and acting as a guardian for the hinterland. The victory over Jericho thus served as a psychological weapon to weaken the will to resistance of the entire land. This was Joshua's intent e.g. not a strategic mission to determine the physical structure of the city, but the psychological makeup of its defenders. (Oratz 8)

The story of the Israelites' failed skirmish with Ai directly after defeating Jericho has significant psychological overtones.[96] It affected the soldiers' morale and it sent a message to the surrounding nations that Israel could be defeated. "When told of the rout [of Ai], Joshua's reaction was to worry about the effect of news of the defeat on the psychology of his adversaries. Having destroyed Jericho precisely to strike fear in the minds of his enemies, Joshua had to reckon with the fact that news of the defeat would quickly spread and reduce the psychological advantage that Jericho had given him" (Gabriel 2003, 135). In Joshua 9:1-2 we see that when all the kings west of the Jordan heard about the utter destruction of Ai they gathered together to battle Joshua and the Israelites. Joshua's reputation preceded him and the individual kings knew that they could not defeat the Israelites by themselves.

Monarchial

Following a stunning defeat by the Philistines, the Israelites are portrayed bringing the Ark of the Covenant into their encampment. This move bolstered the defeated troops and scared the Philistines (1 Sam 4:5-8). In the story even with this psychological edge the Israelites were defeated again and the ark was taken from them.

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[96] "The reason might have been psychological. Joshua's war was a war of extermination, and Jericho was destroyed with utter ruthlessness to strike fear in the minds of the rulers of other cities that Joshua planned to attack. . . . Jericho was by any military calculation a 'soft' target, and it was attacked and destroyed as part of Joshua's campaign of psychological warfare to frighten his enemies. It is instructive in this regard that after the Israelites suffered a minor setback at Ai, Joshua was most concerned with the effect of the defeat on the reputation of his troops in the minds of the Canaanites. Jericho was the first battle to be fought on the soil of Canaan, and perhaps Joshua wanted to make certain that the first combat in the Promised Land was a success, for nothing so excites an army as a successful bloodletting. In all these respects Joshua demonstrated his understanding of that most crucial element of war, the psychological mindset of the soldier" (Gabriel 2003, 133).

> The Philistines heard the noise of the shouting and they wondered, "Why is there such a loud shouting in the camp of the Hebrews?" And when they learned that the Ark of the LORD had come to the camp, the Philistines were frightened; for they said, "God has come to the camp." And they cried, "Woe to us! Nothing like this has ever happened before. Woe to us! Who will save us from the power of this mighty God? He is the same God who struck the Egyptians with every kind of plague in the wilderness! Brace yourselves and be men, O Philistines! Or you will become slaves to the Hebrews as they were slaves to you. Be men and fight!" The Philistines fought; Israel was routed, and they all fled to their homes. The defeat was very great, thirty thousand foot soldiers of Israel fell there. The Ark of God was captured, and Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain. (1 Sam 4:6-11)

The advance word of the presence of the Ark did not cause the Israelites to win the battle, conversely it caused the Philistines to gain resolve and defeat Israel.

Saul is characterized using advance word to mislead Nahash the Ammonite. As was mentioned earlier[97] Nahash told Jabesh-gilead that each man would have to have his right eye gouged out to avoid their total annihilation. Saul gathered warriors to save Jabesh-Gilead (and Israel) from this humiliation. He sent messengers to Jabesh-gilead, "The messengers who had come were told, 'Thus shall you speak to the men of Jabesh-gilead: Tomorrow, when the sun grows hot, you shall be saved.' When the messengers came and told this to the men of Jabesh-gilead, they rejoiced. The men of Jabesh then told [the Ammonites], 'Tomorrow we will surrender to you, and you can do to us whatever you please'" (1 Sam 11:9-10).

Why was Saul shown sending a false message to Jabesh-gilead when in fact he intended to attack the Ammonites early in the morning? Gabriel conjectured:

> With the army assembled at Bezek, Saul sent word to the trapped garrison at Jabesh-gilead that he would attack sometime the next day 'when the sun is hot.' The phrase clearly implies that Saul intended to attack sometime around noon

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[97] See pages 66. 90-91, 150-151 and 174 of this dissertation for further treatment of this passage.

> when, in fact, he was planning no such thing. Why, then, send a false message to the trapped garrison? The answer may lie in Saul's concern for operational security (…) in case the messenger was taken prisoner, or to prevent the garrison from behaving expectantly during the morning and thus giving away the plan. (Gabriel 2003, 205)

Saul also knew that advance word would reach the Ammonites and they would be preparing for battle midday not in the early morning. Saul's ruse worked, and they routed the Ammonites.

Our last example of advance word propaganda concerns the Judean king Uzziah. The author of 2 Chronicles depicts Uzziah as an extraordinary military tactician and innovator, and states that word spread about his war machines.

> Uzziah had an army of warriors, a battle-ready force who were mustered by Jeiel the scribe and Maasseiah the adjutant under Hananiah, one of the king's officers. The clan chiefs, valiants, totaled 2,600; under them was the trained army of 307,500, who made war with might and power to aid the king against the enemy. Uzziah provided them—the whole army—with shields and spears, and helmets and mail, and bows and slingstones. He made clever devices in Jerusalem, set on the towers and the corners, for shooting arrows and large stones. His fame spread far, for he was helped wonderfully, and he became strong. (2 Chr 26:11-15)

5. Conclusion

We have examined propaganda, the war of words, in the Hebrew Bible. Instances of propaganda were typed as either diplomacy – seeking to avert battle through treaties and covenants; threats and taunts - which are employed if diplomacy fails; or 'advance word' – the art of spreading information or mis-information to gain a military advantage.

Diplomacy was typically a civil attempt to resolve underlying tensions between two parties. At times diplomacy was a façade to mislead another nation, as we saw in the cases of the Shechemites and the Gibeonites. Threats and taunts followed upon failed diplomacy because unresolved tensions then rose to the surface of the relationship with one or both of the parties posturing themselves as the dominant force. Sennacherib's

commander, the Rabshakeh, provides a classic example of threats as a psychological weapon. The final type of propaganda addressed in this dissertation was 'advance word' spreading information about your troops with the intent of breaking the will of another nation through rumors and exaggerations.

We have seen that propaganda can affect the will to fight, of both the enemy and the national troops. Next we assess the devastating effect that physical intimidation can have upon an enemy's will to fight.

IV.

PHYSICAL INTIMIDATION IN THE HEBREW BIBLE

1. Introduction

In the ancient Near East physical intimidation was a way of sending a message quickly and clearly to a large group of people. The Assyrians were masters at ruling by terror,[98] and the Israelite commanders used physical intimidation as well.

By causing physical harm to a small segment of a society the aggressor hoped to coerce the rest of the population to submit to their demands. The 'small segment' could be a few people or many hundreds of people. Many times the ones who were being used as examples for the rest of the people were the king or ruler of a defeated people. By humiliating the leader of a nation an army hoped to send the message of hopelessness to the rest of the people.

Throughout recorded history nations have tried to intimidate each other into a place of submission. Armies used visual tactics such as colors, displays of weaponry, troop formations, and displays of religious symbols to try to gain a psychological advantage on their enemies. "On the battlefield the use of elaborate armor, face painting, flags, banners, and military music have all been used at a tactical level psychologically to enhance the impact of an army" (Cowley 374).

Intimidation goes beyond visual displays into the realms of torture and shame as well. The goal is to use the fewest resources possible to achieve the greatest effect upon

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[98] In this dissertation see pages 27-32 for further treatment of the Assyrian use of terrorism.

the enemy. Pointed physical attacks demoralized the enemy when words failed to bring

resolution.

> It is obvious that demoralization, i.e. breaking the will to resist, may in turn be achieved by physical destruction, but statesmen and generals throughout the ages have also used less crude and more ingenious means to win wars. The amount and kind of destruction necessary for victory varies not only with the state of technology but also with the political conduct of the war. (Speier 434)

When an aggressor attempted to use physical intimidation, the other army had to

discern if the aggressor was bluffing about the strength of their force in order to bring

about a quick end to the conflict, or if the aggressor was a superior force, and they were

simply warning the other army to succumb before they experienced major damage.

> An enemy can be defeated by destroying his capability of resistance, but failing this he will also succumb when his will to fight is broken. These two elements of war are not independent of one another. The will to fight is likely to be stronger if the ability to fight, compared with that of the enemy, promises a chance of success. (Speier 434)

Physical intimidation is one step beyond propaganda, yet one step away from full

battle. This chapter examines these physical intimidation tactics - terrorism, humiliation

of leaders, shaming and troop array.

2. Terrorism – mass killings, horrific displays

Terrorism is the most visible form of physical intimidation. One side tries to

bring the other side into submission by damaging people and/or property. Often

terrorism is aimed at leaving a lasting reminder of the aggressor's dominance.

The story of Nahash of Ammon and his treaty terms with Jabesh-Gilead was

mentioned in regard to the use of propaganda.[99] The Biblical author presents terms of the

treaty in 1 Samuel 11, that each person must have their right eye gouged out, were

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[99] See page 66 in this dissertation for this analysis.

terroristic. Imagine the sight of an entire city without a right eye. It would have been a reminder not only to them but to everyone who interacted with them.

Having only one eye would affect a warrior's depth perception which would limit their effectiveness in battle. Additionally, Bede, 7th century Christian writer, explained why Nahash chose the right eye, "For this reason Nahash wanted to deprive the men of Jabesh of their right eyes so that they would not be able to see anything they needed to see for their defense against the enemy since they would have covered the left side of their face with their shields in battle" (Franke 236-237).[100]

In 1 Samuel 14 the author stated that Jonathan attacked a Philistine outpost and defeated several Philistines which spread terror throughout the Philistine camp. The Philistine soldiers began to attack each other out of fear and confusion. Saul heard that there was some kind of confusion in the Philistine camp and he called for the Ark of the Covenant to be brought into the camp as some sort of good luck charm, or oracular device.[101] This passage does not even verify that the Ark made it into camp before Saul decided to attack the Philistines (1 Sam 14:18-20).

Some Israelite mercenaries were part of the Philistine troops and they turned on the Philistines when the battle began to favor the Israelites (1 Sam 14:21). The Philistine

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[100] Flavius Josephus shared Bede's hypothesis, "He [Nahash] did this, so that, when their left eye was covered by their shields, they would be completely helpless" [*brackets mine*] (Josephus 117).

[101] "Although theological solutions to tactical problems are always likely to be problematic, the military significance of sending for the Ark of Yahweh ought not to be overlooked. The presence of the Ark on the battlefield was tantamount to the participation in the battle of Yahweh himself. (…) One ought, therefore, to see the Israelite use of the Ark for what it was, the application of a theological weapons system employed to affect the outcome of the battle" (Gabriel 2003, 191).

troops could have included other mercenaries as well, which could augment unfamiliarity and distrust within the Philistine army.

1 Samuel 18 tells the story of David killing two hundred Philistines and taking their foreskins to win the hand of Saul's daughter Michal. "David went out with his men and killed two hundred Philistines; David brought their foreskins and they were counted out for the king, that he might become the king's son-in-law" (1 Sam 18:27). Those hastily circumcised bodies would undoubtably have caused ripples of indignation and fear in the Philistines when they were discovered. The penis is the most prized part of a man's body and the desecration of these bodies portrayed in this story would appear to be lewd and heartless.

In 2 Samuel 4 Ishbosheth son of Saul is portrayed trying to establish himself as king of Israel in his father's stead. Abner, who had been Saul's general, sided with Ishbosheth against David initially, but eventually he formed a pact with David. The Biblical story states that Joab killed Abner because he was upset at David's acceptance of Abner, who killed Joab's brother Asahel,[102]. Abner's death led to the failure of Ishbosheth's attempt at the throne, (2 Sam 4:1). His death at the hands of two of his officers led David to make an example of them: "David gave orders to the young men, who killed them; they cut off their hands and feet and hung them up by the pool in Hebron" (2 Sam 4:12). Their death and dismemberment was meant to send a message to

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[102] In this dissertation see page 73 for further treatment of this story.

all of Israel that David was a righteous man, and that neither Abner nor Ishbosheth's

blood was on his hands.[103]

Yet there was another underlying terrorizing message implicit in David's actions:

David was powerful enough that he could kill, maim, and publicly display the dead

bodies of two of Abner and Ishbosheth's key military personnel, Baanah and Rechab.

This public example strengthened his position as king.

> All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "We are your own flesh
> and blood. Long before now, when Saul was king over us, it was you who led
> Israel in war; and the LORD said to you: You shall shepherd my people Israel;
> you shall be ruler of Israel." All the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron,
> and King David made a pact with them in Hebron before the LORD. And they
> anointed David king over Israel. (2 Sam 5:1-3)

Terrorists often want to appear random in their decisions and unreasonable in

their actions. Assyria's imaginative cruelty and wanton violence was actually a

calculated decision to leave a lasting impression of their absolute disregard for human

life.

After David's defeat of the Moabites in 2 Samuel 8, the Biblical author showed

David executing seemingly cruel and random actions "he made them lie down on the

ground and he measured them off with a cord, he measured out two lengths of cord for

those who were to be put to death, and one length for those to be spared. And the

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[103] "It is the chief goal of this part of the story of David's rise to demonstrate the
new king's innocence of the two assassinations (viz. of Abiner and Ishbaal) that opened
the way to his kingship in the north" (McCarter 1984, 120).

Moabites became tributary vassals of David" (2 Sam 8:2).[104] "David is pictured to be coldly more arbitrary, claiming for himself the godly power of life and death. The treatment of prisoners provides a means of establishing total control over enemies, of melting their hearts in terror of the fearless and guiltless way with which the tyrant takes life" (Niditch 130-131). This kind of capricious slaughter certainly made a lasting impression upon the surviving prisoners and their families.

In 2 Samuel 19 Joab, David's long-time general, is pictured felling David's rebellious son Absalom. David then replaced Joab with Amasa, who had supported Absalom in his rebellion against David. In 2 Samuel 20 the Biblical author wrote of another revolt led by a man named Sheba and Joab used the upheaval caused by this revolt to murder Amasa and send a message to anyone who might desire to take his place.

> They were near the great stone in Gibeon when Amasa appeared before them. Joab was wearing his military dress, with his sword girded over it and fastened around his waist in its sheath; and, as he stepped forward, it fell out. Joab said to Amasa, "How are you, brother?" and with his right hand Joab took hold of Amasa's beard as if to kiss him. Amasa was not on his guard against the sword in Joab's [left] hand, and [Joab] drove it into his belly so that his entrails poured out on the ground and he died; he did not need to strike him a second time. Joab and his brother Abishai then set off in pursuit of Sheba son of Bichri, while one of Joab's henchmen stood by the corpse and called out, "Whoever favors Joab, and whoever is on David's side, follow Joab!" Amasa lay in the middle of the road, drenched in his blood; and the man saw that everyone stopped. And when he saw that all the people were stopping, he dragged Amasa from the road into the field and covered him with a garment. (2 Sam 20:8-12)

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[104] "[Abravanel] suggests that David had the Moabites line up and prostrate themselves on the ground. Seeing the length of this line to be three cord-lengths, he measured off two cord-lengths, with the intention of putting two-thirds of the Moabites to death. An alternate explanation is provided by [Targum Jonathan ben Uziel] who translates חבלים as 'lots.' According to this interpretation, all the captured Moabites were required to draw lots. Those choosing lots with the word 'live' on them were allowed to remain alive while the remainder were forced to lie on the ground where they were killed" (Sosevsky 304).

Joab understood that Amasa's corpse would send a message about power, control, and leadership. Joab was intimating that anyone he perceived to be a traitor would be killed regardless of what David thought of them. He was also attempting to re-establish himself as commander in the minds of the people, and, hopefully, David.[105]

In 2 Chronicles 25 Amaziah of Judah is portrayed adding an element of terror to his defeat of the Edomites.[106] "Amaziah took courage and, leading his army, he marched to the Valley of Salt. He slew 10,000[107] men of Seir; another 10,000 the men of Judah captured alive and brought to the top of Sela. They threw them down from the top of Sela and every one of them was burst open" (2 Chr 25:11-12). This act of horrific death was meant to send a message to the surviving Edomites and to other nations as well.

As the story of Amaziah continues he finally threatened and goaded Jehoash of Israel into battle. Jehoash defeated Amaziah soundly, then he made an indelible impression upon the hearts and minds of Amaziah and all of Judah.

> "The men of Judah were routed by Israel, and they all fled to their homes. King Joash of Israel captured Amaziah son of Joash son of Jehoahaz, king of Judah, in Beth-shemesh. He brought him to Jerusalem and made a breach of 400 cubits in

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[105] "Joab's temperament was revealed in the use to which he put Amasa's body. He posted a soldier to guard the disemboweled corpse and left it in the middle of the road so that 'Amasa was weltering in gore in the middle of the highway.' Those who, in war, have seen corpses rotting in the heat will recognize the sight as truly impressive (…) Joab's message to these men was clear. Look upon the corpse of your commander who betrayed David and choose which side you are on. The grisly tactic seems to have worked. 'for all the men went on by after Joab in pursuit of Sheba son of Bichri'" (Gabriel 2003, 275).

[106] This passage is discussed in this dissertation on page 77.

[107] אלף could mean a "troop of fighting men" (Briggs 13), often thought of as one thousand men, but possibly as few as five men, with an average of ten men. The actual size of an אלף may have varied by the tribe or clan from which it was drawn, and/or the period in which it was drawn. See Briggs pp. 13-16 for further discussion.

the wall of Jerusalem, from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate. Then, with all the gold and silver and all the utensils that were to be found in the House of God in the custody of Obed-edom, and with the treasuries of the royal palace, and with the hostages, he returned to Samaria. (2 Chr 25:22-24)

Terrorism which was acted out upon innocents was especially memorable. In 2 Kings 15 Menahem king of Israel is portrayed as a wantonly violent king. His most horrific act was ripping open the wombs of pregnant women.[108] "At that time, [marching] from Tirzah, Menahem subdued Tiphsah and all who were in it, and its territory; and because it did not surrender, he massacred [its people] and ripped open all its pregnant women" (2 Kgs 15:16). The author sent sent two clear messages by picturing this act. First, Menahem was not averse to harming innocents. Women were not typically warriors in the ancient Near East so this act was performed upon persons who were not even part of the battle. Second, by killing unborn babies he was attacking their posterity. It was a deep jab into the hope of life and prosperity. Menahem sent a message that Tiphsah should have surrendered, and they should not rebel against his authority.

Some acts of terrorism were performed by victors upon the leaders of a defeated people to cause the defeated people to be submissive. Although the actions were performed upon a leader the intended audience was the leader's nation as a whole.

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[108] Cf. 2 Kings 8:11-12 where Hazael was sent by Ben-hadad of Aram to ask Elisha if he would recover from an illness and Elisha gave Hazael this reply: "The man of God kept his face expressionless for a long time; and then he wept. 'Why does my lord weep?' asked Hazael. 'Because I know,' he replied, 'what harm you will do to the Israelite people; you will set their fortresses on fire, put their young men to the sword, dash their little one in pieces, and rip open their pregnant women'" (2 Kgs 8:11-12).

3. Humiliation of political or military leaders

Sending a message through the humiliation of an opposing leader, can be done in two basic ways. The first was to maim the leader in such a way that he would be a constant reminder of his insufficiency and the low state of his nation. The second was to kill the leader in some horrifically torturous way that would serve as a lesson to future leaders.

<u>Maiming the leader(s)</u>

Previously we discussed Gideon's threat in Judges 8 to thresh the leaders of Succoth with thorns if they did not give him supplies as the Israelites were chasing Zebah and Zalmunna.[109] They refused, and the Biblical author wrote that when Gideon captured Zebah and Zalmunna he came back and punished the elders and others with desert thorns and briers. "And he took the elders of the city and, [bringing] desert thorns and briers, he punished the people of Succoth with them. As for Penuel, he tore down its tower and killed the townspeople" (Judg 8:16-17). This type of torture involved puncturing and tearing flesh with the thorns and briers, leaving scars that would serve as reminders of their decision not to aid Joshua.

Another example of the demoralization of a people by shaming their leader is found in Judges 1 where the tribes of Judah and Simeon are depicted driving people out of Judah's allotted territory.

> When Judah advanced, the LORD delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hands, and they defeated ten thousand of them at Bezek. At Bezek, they encountered Adoni-bezek, engaged him in battle, and defeated the Canaanites and the Perizzites. Adoni-bezek fled, but they pursued him and captured him; and they cut off his thumbs and big toes. And Adoni-bezek said, 'Seventy kings, with

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[109] See page 69 of this dissertation for further discussion of this passage.

thumbs and big toes cut off, used to pick up scraps under my table; as I have done, so God has requited me." They brought him to Jerusalem and he died there. (Judg 1:4-7)

Adoni-bezek was not at all shocked by this treatment, and is portrayed acknowledging that he had done the same to defeated enemy commanders.

This type of treatment was more than a punishment; it was a living message to the Canaanites who now lived with the mental image of their leader living the life of a dog at the feet of the Israelite leaders.[110]

> The primary purpose of the mutilation is to disable the kings for fighting and possibly disqualify them for reigning. Secondarily yet also important, the kings will continue to bear the shame of their mutilation because of the resultant inadequacy of having no thumbs or big toes. Even today, a person without thumbs and toes would be an unpleasant sight that we might turn away from or avoid. Without the big toes a person walks with a limping gate which separates him from normal people, and precludes him from running and having the agility to be warrior. And to be separated and an unpleasant sight is shameful. It violates pride to have others stare at one's inadequacy. It is shame that a person will not escape all of his life. Having one's thumbs cut off means that a person cannot perform many normal human tasks. Not having thumbs makes a person subhuman. And of course, one of the many things this person cannot hold and manipulate with dexterity is a sword or weapon. Thus again the person can no longer be a warrior or act aggressively (Huber 81-82).

Killing and/or humiliating a nation's leader had tremendous impact upon that nation, perhaps even causing them to completely lose their will to fight.

In Jeremiah 52 the Biblical author wrote that Zedekiah the king of Judah was humiliated physically after he revolted against Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon. "The king of Babylon had Zedekiah's sons slaughtered before his eyes; he also had all the officials of Judah slaughtered at Riblah. Then the eyes of Zedekiah were put out, and he

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[110] "It becomes apparent that violently altering the bodies of one's enemies was not a random act of sadistic aggression in ancient Israel but was in fact one that functioned in certain striking and important ways" (Lemos 225).

was chained in bronze fetters. The king of Babylon brought him to Babylon and put him in prison, [where he remained] to the day of his death" (Jer 52:10-11). Although the torture and humiliation of a leader was meant to send a message to others, there is definitely a strong element of personal punishment in this scene as well.

Assassinating the leader(s)

Leadership assassination would not only demoralize an opponent but would also rob it of organization and direction. In Joshua 8, after Joshua and the Israelites defeated Jericho they assumed that the small neighboring town of Ai would be an easy target. The Biblical author wrote that following a failed first attack, Joshua's second attack involved setting up an ambush[111] that allowed the Israelites to decimate Ai.

He is then portrayed burning Ai[112] and impaling its king. "At sunset, Joshua had the corpse taken down from the stake and it was left lying at the entrance to the city gate. They raised a great heap of stones over it, which is there to this day" (Josh 8:28-29). Rabbinic author Ralbag conjectured, "He did this in order to publicize his victory so that the other Canaanite kings would be afraid to wage war against Israel" (Drucker 222).

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[111] Malamat says of the ambush tactic, "Such simulated, controlled flight – which was to be reversed at a specific point upon order – was (and is) a most difficult manoeuvre to execute, involving a certain risk, albeit calculated, and reveals an admirable level of sophistication" (Malamat 1978, 15).

[112] "Joshua was fighting a war of conquest in which the objective was not the killing of enemy soldiers but driving settled peoples off the land and out of the cities. To accomplish this required the application of strategic brutality, for nothing works so well in this regard as the fear of death lest it be death itself. To achieve this strategic goal Joshua's army had to be trained to carry out the wholesale slaughter of combatants and noncombatants when ordered to do so, in the fashion of other professional armies of antiquity for whom the slaughter of noncombatants was not unusual" (Gabriel 2003, 125).

See pages , 145-146 and 165-166 in this dissertation for further discussion about this passage.

In Joshua 10 the Biblical author wrote that the Israelites fought a coalition of five kings and cornered them in a cave.[113] Joshua asked that they be brought out and put to death in a ritual manner, "Joshua had them put to death and impaled on five stakes, and they remained impaled on the stakes until evening. At sunset Joshua ordered them taken down from the poles and thrown into the cave in which they had hidden. Large stones were placed over the mouth of the cave, [and there they are] to this very day" (Josh 10:26-27).[114]

"Israel's ideology is one of 'terror'. The destruction of the populations of enemy cities is a practice of an ideology of 'calculated frightfulness'. The execution and hanging of kings on trees must also be considered in the light of ancient Near Eastern ideologies of conquest. Such practices 'soften up' the opposition. The elimination of the population also enhances the speed of de-culturation and hence colonization" (Younger 1990, 233-234).

The five Amorite kings hung side by side would have been quite a sight.[115] This public display would have disgraced the opposing forces.[116] Their trusted leaders were now being picked apart by birds. It left their armies feeling humiliated and scared.[117]

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[113] Younger notes there were several instances of ancient Near Eastern kings fleeing to a cave for protection (Younger 1990, 221-222).

[114] "You must not let his corpse remain on the stake overnight, but must bury him the same day. For an impaled body is an affront to God; you shall not defile the land that the LORD your God is giving you to possess" (Deut 21:23).

[115] "Also the fact that Joshua executed these kings and hung them on trees is paralleled by numerous instances where Assyrian monarchs hung the corpses of the foreign leaders on threes. Thus, Sennacherib states concerning the rulers of Ekron: 'the governors (and) nobles who had sinned I put to death; and I hung their corpses on poles around the city (Col. III.8-10)'" (Younger 1990, 222-223).
See pages 134, 146-147, 166 and 172 of this dissertation for further treatment.

In Judges 3 a Benjaminite named Ehud is portrayed using the tactic of

assassination to rally the Israelites to victory over the Moabites. Israel was overtaken by

a coalition of Moabites, Ammonites and Amalekites, headed by Eglon king of Moab. In

the story Ehud devised a plan that would allow him an opportunity to assassinate Eglon,

thereby throwing the Moabite-led coalition into disarray.[118] Ehud was part of the

contingent who regularly delivered the Israelites' tribute to Eglon, so he had developed a

familiarity with Eglon and his environs. The following verses describe how Ehud

assassinated Eglon:

> When [Ehud] had finished presenting the tribute, he dismissed the people who
> had conveyed the tribute. But he himself returned from Pesilim, near Gilgal, and
> said, "Your Majesty, I have a secret message for you." [Eglon] thereupon
> commanded, "Silence!" So all those in attendance left his presence; and when
> Ehud approached him, he was sitting alone in his cool upper chamber. Ehud said,
> "I have a message for you from God"; whereupon he rose from his seat.
> Reaching with his left hand, Ehud drew the dagger from his right side and drove it
> into [Eglon's] belly. The fat closed over the blade and the hilt went in after the
> blade—for he did not pull the dagger out of his belly—and the filth came out.
> (Judg 3:18-22)

> Then according to the Biblical author Ehud left the chamber, locked the doors,

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[116] "The action described indicates the total humiliation of the conquered enemy;
it is attested as such in 1 Kings 5:3; Ps 110:1; cf. Deut 33:29. It is often to be found in
pictures from the ancient Near East" (Soggin 1972, 129).

[117] "The dead enemy kings, the exemplary Others, are hung on trees in public
view after Joshua 'smote them' (v. 26). As Boling makes clear, the intent is again a
discursive one: 'this is not death by hanging or crucifixion, but the public exposure of the
corpses after execution so as to inspire fear, a typical Assyrian tactic in psychological
warfare" (Rowlett 171).

[118] "In the case of Ehud and his battle against the Moabites, he used the simple
tactic of demoralization of the enemy … Ehud's plan was simple: demoralize the enemy
by assassinating their warrior-king. Then, in this state of confusion the invaders would be
an easy target" (Hobbs 168).

walked past the king's guards and officials, and went back to his own territory. Ehud's attack on Eglon in his own chambers was a blow to the psyche of the Moabite nation. Ehud had been able to gain an audience with the corpulent Eglon, and drive a knife so deep into him that his fat covered its hilt. When his guards found him dead and spilling out bodily fluids it was embarrassing to the entire nation. The fact that Ehud escaped unharmed, and inspired many Israelites to revolt with him by blowing a horn (שופר), made his act of assassination all the more meaningful.[119] As a result of the assassination the Israelites routed the Moabites and drove them out of Israel and the land of Israel experienced eighty years of peace.[120]

Ehud's scheme to assassinate Eglon involved several psychological elements - Ehud's secret left-handedness; Ehud appealing to Eglon's vanity and excess; Ehud's 'secret message from the YHWH' intended for Eglon; and the shame of Eglon's attendants. Ehud manipulated each of these elements to trick and demoralize the Moabites.

In Judges 8:18-21 Gideon is portrayed asking his son Jether to kill Zebah and Zalmunna. A request of this nature would have two goals: he was trying to introduce Jether to the ways of being a warrior, and he was trying to humiliate these men even further by allowing them to be slain by a boy. Since Jether did not have the strength or experience of a seasoned warrior, his blows would have been initially misplaced and ineffective which would have amounted to torture. One commentator paraphrased Judges

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[119] "The killing of the king in the circumstances described serves to create confusion among the invaders or potential invaders, allowing Benjamin to attack and defeat them" (Soggin 1981, 54-55).

[120] This passage is treated further in this dissertation on page 148.

8:21 this way, "They said, 'Your son is not strong enough to kill us quickly. If he would smite us we would linger in a painful, drawn-out death. You can kill us with one blow'" (Scherman 604). That may be why they challenged Gideon to kill them himself. "Come you slay us; for strength comes with manhood" (Judg 8:21). Battle-hardened Gideon was probably very efficient at ending their lives.[121]

The story of Abimelech's death provides another example of the effectiveness of assassinations. The Biblical author wrote that Abimelech led his troops to burn down the fortified tower of Thebez. While preparing to set the door of the tower on fire, he was seriously injured by a woman of Thebez who dropped an upper millstone from atop the tower. Dying, Abimelech demanded of his attendant, "Draw your dagger and finish me off, that they may not say of me, 'a woman killed him!' So his attendant stabbed him, and he died. When the men of Israel saw that Abimelech was dead, everyone went home" (Judg 9:54-55). Abimelech avoided the humiliation of being killed by a woman but his plans to control the region around Shechem and become king of Israel were thwarted.

In 1 Samuel 15, Samuel is depicted instructing Saul to destroy all of the people and animals of the Amalekites after he defeated Amalek. In the story Saul and the Israelites did defeat the Amalekites, but they allowed their king Agag and the best of the animals to survive. When Samuel arrived and heard the animals, and saw Agag, he was livid. Saul did most of what he was instructed to do but he acquiesced to his men's request for the best of the plunder, and he allowed Agag to live. Samuel told Saul that the kingdom of Israel was going to be taken away from him and he requested that Agag

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[121] "The insult of being slain by a youth is unfulfilled, and so is the painful death of a bungled attempt. The warrior kings request and are given death at the hand of a man of might" (Klein 63).

be brought to him. "Samuel said, 'Bring forward to me King Agag of Amalek.' Agag approached him with faltering steps; and Agag said, 'Ah, bitter death is at hand!' Samuel said: 'As your sword has bereaved women, so shall your mother be bereaved among women.' And Samuel cut Agag down before the LORD at Gilgal" (1 Sam 15:32-33). [122]

The story of the battle between David and Goliath in 1 Samuel 17 involved more than one aspect of psychological warfare. When David ultimately felled Goliath with a stone, (1 Sam 17:48-51) and then proceeded to use Goliath's own sword to kill to behead him, it sent a humiliating message to the Philistines. Although Goliath was not their king he was chosen to represent them on the battlefield. A boy had bested their champion and there was no doubt that Goliath was dead — David stood there with Goliath's blood all over him by Goliath's severed head. David's defeat of Goliath rallied the Israelites to defeat the Philistines. [123]

In 1 Samuel 31 the Biblical author wrote that the Philistines defeated Saul and the

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[122] "The verb (waysassep) is unique to this passage, and its meaning must be derived from the context and its treatment in the versions (BDB: 'hew in pieces'; KB: 'cut in pieces,' comparing Postbiblical Hebrew ssp, 'dissever'). LXX renders it kai esphaxen, 'and (Samuel) slaughtered,' using a verb that suggests sacrificial butchering. This fact and the phrase 'in the presence of Yahweh' suggest that Agag suffered a ritual death. Ritual dismemberment was a punishment for covenant violation" (McCarter 1980, 269).

Agag was not humiliated by Samuel's desire to kill him. He could tell that Samuel was the kind of man who understood what must be done in war. In my estimation, the king who was humiliated was Saul, because he had not killed the man who himself understood that he should have been dead. Samuel acted more like a king than Saul himself and Agag's death at Samuel's hand drove that point home.

[123] For further treatment of this passage see pages 72-73 and 153 of this dissertation.

The author again portrays someone other than King Saul as the hero, to his shame. Samuel, who was an old man, had killed King Agag instead of Saul; now David, who was a boy, had killed Goliath and inspired the Israelites to defeat the Philistines. The author is trying to thoroughly humiliate Saul by shaming him from both ends of the age spectrum.

Israelites, Saul and his sons were killed and their corpses were mutilated and displayed

publicly.

> The next day the Philistines came to strip the slain, and they found Saul and his three sons lying on Mount Gilboa. They cut off his head and stripped him of his armor, and they sent them throughout the land of the Philistines, to spread the news in the temples of their idols and among the people. They placed his armor in the temple of Ashtaroth, and they impaled his body on the wall of Beth-shan. (1 Sam 31:8-10)

The traveling display of Saul's head and armor, and the public display of his body and

the bodies of his sons, were meant to be a deterrent to the Israelites, and encouragement

to the Philistines. Notice also that Saul's armor was placed in their temple paying

homage to the goddess Ashtoreth who they believed had defeated YHWH. Some men

from Jabesh-Gilead went to gather their bones and bury them. Saul and his sons were

finally given a proper burial and Israel was encouraged.

In 2 Samuel 21 David is portrayed handing over seven of Saul's descendents to

the Gibeonites so that the Gibeonites could avenge Saul's attempt to annihilate them

while he was king. Although the author portrays this scene as a way to appease YHWH

and end a famine, in practical terms it could be seen as David's way of denigrating the

house of Saul and displaying his dominance.

> Instead, the king took Armoni and Mephibosheth, the two sons that Rizpah daughter of Aiah bore to Saul, and the five sons that Merab daughter of Saul bore to Adriel son of Barzillai the Meholathite, and he handed them over to the Gibeonites. They impaled them on the mountain before the LORD; all seven of them perished at the same time. (2 Sam 21:8-9)

These deaths and their public display would send a message that those in Israel, and the

descendents of Saul in particular, should not rebel against David or they would face

similar consequences.

Physical intimidation typically involved an aggressor flaunting his strength and virility. Sometimes this aggression was focused upon the leaders of another nation to send a message to the rest of the nation and future generations as well. One element of physical intimidation is shaming, exposing the weakness of another person.

4. Shaming – exposure of weaknesses

As we have explored terrorism and the humiliation of leaders we have touched upon the issue of shaming repeatedly.[124] In attacking or torturing a person or a nation, the aggressor typically exposed and exploited that person or nation's physical or emotional weaknesses.[125] "Shaming figures prominently in diplomacy and warfare. In ancient Israel shaming actions are geared to emphasize defenselessness, vulnerability, inferiority, subjugation, and to strip people of their human dignity and respect. These actions can be effective psychologically because they violate people's pride. In addition it has the effect of strengthening the confidence and sense of superiority of the shamer" (Huber 92-93).

<u>Shaming others</u>

In 1 Samuel 24 and 26 the Biblical author depicts two instances of physical intimidation between Saul and David. We have already examined the threats that

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[124] Even YHWH speaks of shaming other nations and Israel several times. Isa 7:20 shaming Ahaz by shaving his head, legs and beard; Isa 13:4-8 Babylon will cry out like a woman in labor; Isa 19:6-7 Egypt is like a woman; Jer 48:37-39 Moab's head is shaved and beard is gone; Jer 48:41 Moab's warriors are like women in labor; Jer 51:30 Babylon's warriors are like women; Nahum 3:5-7 Ninevah is naked; Nahum 3:13 Ninevah is naked.

[125] "Shame is above all visual and public. Unlike guilt, shame requires an audience: the watchful community. In the psychic meaning of shaming, it is the 'eye' of the community and the related sense of paranoic observation that are assimilated to worldview and personality" (David Gilmore in Lemos, 228).

accompanied David cutting off the hem of Saul's robe[126] and taking his spear and water

jug while he slept, but these would be acts of physical intimidation as well. "Saul too

enters a cave to engage in this idiom, <relieving himself>, the same cave where David

and his men are hiding. David opts not to kill Saul while he is in this exposed position of

vulnerability and instead cuts off a piece of his garment, a proof that he could have killed

but did not (1 Sam 24:1-7). The severed piece of cloth also conjures images of

unmanning the enemy" (Niditch 118). The Biblical author is intimating that Saul was

ineffective against David.[127] Gregory of Nyssa, a 4th century CE Christian author stated:

> "This was nothing other than a bloodless trophy against his enemies. And he
> cried out to Saul in a loud voice and told him about this new and marvelous
> heroism, which was unstained by the defilement of blood, in which the hero was
> victorious and the one defeated was saved from death. For David's excellence is
> not attested in the fall of his enemy, but the superiority of his power is made
> clearer in the salvation of his opponent from danger." (Franke 307)

In this story David took advantage of Saul in his two most vulnerable states –

squatting in the midst of bowel movement and sleeping. The underlying message was

that David was more righteous, cunning and powerful than Saul. David did not have to

kill or maim Saul to send these messages; he simply gave Saul lasting memories of his

weakness at the mercy of David's strength. Saul acknowledged his weakness before

David, "Yes, you have just revealed how generously you treated me, for the LORD

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[126] See page 70-71 of this dissertation for further treatment of this passage.

[127] Rabbi David Kimchi (Redak) stated, "After he had received no answer from
the people, he repeated his call to Abner. Our Rabbis explain thus: What have you to
answer now, when you see the spear and jug in my hand? When I severed Saul's cloak,
you said that it had been torn by a thorn, and that had I entered the camp, you and your
men would have cut me to pieces (vid. supra 24). What have you to answer now? You
should have been silent then and permitted a reconciliation between Saul and me"
(Rosenberg 1993).

delivered me into your hands and you did not kill me" (1 Sam 24:19).

In 2 Samuel 16 David's son Absalom is portrayed rebelling against his father and driving him from his palace. The Biblical author wrote that Absalom was given this advice, "And Ahithophel said to Absalom, 'Have intercourse with your father's concubines, who he left to mind the palace; and when all Israel hears that you have dared the wrath of your father, all who support you will be encouraged.' So they pitched a tent for Absalom on the roof, and Absalom lay with his father's concubines with the full knowledge of all Israel" (2 Sam 16:21-22). This act would humiliate his father and send a message that Absalom had taken over the kingdom.[128] All of Israel would know that David left women unguarded in his palace and that he could not, or would not, protect his women let alone the nation. This act would display Absalom's virility and ambition, as opposed to David's retreat and weakness.

2 Samuel 10 provides another portrayal of shaming. In the story King David sent word to Hanun, the new king of Ammon, that David would honor the treaties he made with his father. Hanun was advised that David's courtiers were actually spying out the land so Hanun humiliated David's courtiers, "So Hanun seized David's courtiers, clipped off one side of their beards and cut away half of their garments at the buttocks, and sent them off. When David was told of it, he dispatched men to meet them, for the men were

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[128] "Ahithophel advised Absalom to cause an irrevocable breach between himself and his father by coming upon David's concubines, an act that would rule out any possibility of reconciliation. [Rabbi Joseph Kara and Abravanel]. The Midrash, however, suggests that Ahithophel had himself hoped to become king and advised Absalom to commit an act that he felt would lead to his demise [Yalkut Shimoni]" (Sosevsky 366).

greatly embarrassed. And the king gave orders: 'Stop in Jericho until your beards grow

back; then you can return'" (2 Sam 10:4-5). [129]

In this depiction Hanun shamed these men by exposing them,[130] it was the norm

for a man to have a beard (see Lev 19:27) and they now had half of a beard. Note that in

2 Sam 10:4-5 above David allowed them to stay away from Jerusalem until their beards

grew back. They may have felt that they would be thought of as boys without a beard. It

was also the norm to wear clothes (Amos 2:13-16) and they had half of their clothes. If

they pulled down the front of their robe to hide their genitalia then they exposed their

buttocks and vice versa. Again, they would feel childish for as children they probably

were not concerned about nudity at all.

> In the case of the cutting of the beard, a man's beard in ancient Israel is a symbol
> of his vitality, manly dignity, and distinction, which demands respect. It is a
> man's glory, as a woman's hair is hers. Note that a leper is required to shave his
> beard (Lev 14:9), in order to remove his respect. Because of this veneration of
> the beard, one way of insulting and shaming a man is to cut off his beard (cf. Isa
> 7:20; 50:6), particularly cutting off only half of the beard. It makes a man look
> foolish. (…) The other aspect of the shaming action is the cutting off of the
> garments at the hips, and thus publicly exposing their genitals. (Huber 61-62)

[129] "In order to prevent this possible spying and aggressiveness, Hanun makes the servants ineffective by shaming them. He also shames and belittles David through his servants, so that Hanun is the one who takes control. These shaming actions are an attempt to belittle, to prevent aggressiveness, to express power and control, and surely to challenge David. . . . They would suffer further shame if they returned to live among their own community, looking so foolish with only half a beard. In addition if they walk the streets of Jerusalem in their shamed condition, they will reflect the shaming of David. So a further complication of the shaming action is the men's exclusion from their community" (Huber 63).

[130] "Part of the humiliation lies in the violation of expectations and the inappropriateness of the situation. As Blaike points out, ambassadors are specially chosen men who hold an eminent position in the community. Such men should be treated with respect, not shame" (Huber 62).

Hanun's shaming of David's courtiers incited David and the Israelites, and in the end

Hanun and his allies were soundly defeated.[131]

Shaming oneself

In 2 Kings 3 the Biblical author wrote that the prophet Elisha prophesied that a

coalition of the kings of Judah, Israel and Edom would defeat the Moabites in battle,

destroying people and property. In the story the Moabites formed themselves along their

border in preparation for battle. In the morning the water flowing from the direction of

Edom appeared to be tinged red with blood and the Moabites assumed that the coalition

forces had attacked each other. Moab decided to attack the coalition in their weakest

moment.

> They entered the Israelite camp, and the Israelites arose and attacked the
> Moabites, who fled before them. They advanced, constantly attacking the
> Moabites, and they destroyed the towns. Every man threw a stone into each fertile
> field, so that it was covered over; and they stopped up every spring and felled
> every fruit tree. Only the walls of Kir-hareseth were left, and then the slingers
> surrounded it and attacked it. Seeing that the battle was going against him, the
> king of Moab led an attempt of seven hundred swordsmen to break a way through
> to the king of Edom; but they failed. So he took his first-born son, who was to
> succeed him as king, and offered him up on the wall as a burnt offering. A great
> wrath came upon Israel, so they withdrew from him and went back to [their own]
> land. (2 Kgs 3:24-27)

When the king of Moab sacrificed his son on the wall the battle changed abruptly.

Either the king of Moab was making one last ditch appeal to his gods for assistance, or he

was admitting his weakness and the weakness of his people, and he was trying to shame

the Israelites into abandoning their attack. "When people emphasize (or even exaggerate)

their shame, they take control. They are the ones who are doing the shaming of

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[131] "Thus are David's emissaries to the Ammonites shaved and their garments cut in half up to their 'rear ends,' an aggressive act that humiliates and feminizes David's messengers, leading to war and the Ammonites' own eventual subjugation" (Niditch 118).

themselves, so no one else can shame them further. Taking control of one's shaming

prevents further shaming from others and takes some of the sting out of shame" (Huber

86). Perhaps he shamed himself and his people so that the Israelites would not.

> Nonetheless a recent theory by Margalit has the same psychological tone. He refers to a Ugaritic text from the thirteenth century B.C. that includes the instruction that they people should pray to Baal in case of besiegement, and should offer a bull and a 'firstborn, a child.' It follows that Mesha's sacrifice of his son, rather than unprecedented was in fact an integral, if seldomly implemented, part of an age-old Canaanite tradition of sacral warfare. He then translates 'wrath' as a 'psychological breakdown' of the Israelite troops, a fear or a trauma that was evoked by the 'conditioned reflex' of such a deed. (Deijl 194).

> The Biblical author pictures the coalition forces being revulsed by this act.

Warfare was acceptable; death was acceptable; killing innocents was acceptable; but

child sacrifice was beyond the pale.[132] It seemed as if the Israelite force could not come

to grips with the seemingly senseless and barbaric act they just witnessed.[133]

5. Troop array – presentation of troops and armaments

While most physical intimidation was done to others, an army could also array or

display themselves in such a way to intimidate or confuse others. In the story of the

conquest of Jericho in Joshua 6 the Israelites were commanded to circle the city of

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[132] I believe this story depicts child sacrifice. The text gives no indication of the age of the person sacrificed, but the highly emotional response to this sacrifice leads me to believe that a child was sacrificed.

[133] Herzog noted that the sacrifice could have been a signal to the Israelites that there was plague amongst the Moabites. "No factual explanation exists for this abrupt end to so costly and so meticulously prepared a campaign, just on the verge of final, complete success. Child sacrifice has been known in the ancient East as an act performed in extremis, because of imminent plague. Some scholars have suggested that the plague would have broken out in besieged Kerak and that by this desperate act Mesha hoped to exorcise the evil spirits and stop it from spreading. The allies, afraid of contagion, thought it wisest to disengage as quickly as possible. Another explanation could be that Mesha believed in child sacrifice as a last resort to avert the anger of the gods, but by performing this act he unwittingly gave the impression that the plague had broken out which made the allies decamp" (Herzog 171).

Jericho in utter silence once a day for six days, and then on the seventh day they were to

circle the city seven times and shout loudly when the priests blew their trumpets. The

people of Jericho knew all about the exploits of the Israelites from the Reed Sea to the

Jordan River. From what the people of Jericho could see, the Israelites appeared to be

ready to attack Jericho. On the first day the Israelites approached the city walls, but they

only walked around the city in a solemn, religious procession. The people of Jericho

would have been perplexed by this action. The people of Jericho would have thoroughly

expected the Israelites to attack them. Then the second day the Israelites came again and

did not attack, but just circled the city again. Then they did the same thing on the third,

fourth, fifth and sixth days. The people of Jericho would have been lulled into a feeling of

uneasy sameness. Although the actions of the Israelites were not normal, it was now

expected.

> "Could the encircling manoeuvre around the city, the horn blasts and the great
> battle-cry preceding the miraculous collapse of the walls (Joshua 6:20) also be
> survivals from a realistic account of the city's fall? The repeated marching
> around Jericho on six successive days (Joshua 6:3, 14) has been regarded as a
> psychological device to lower the enemy's guard, preparing the way for a breach
> into the city. If so, this stratagem was a noted form of attaining surprise, which
> we may term 'conditioning', that is, deceiving the enemy by repeating the same
> 'field exercise' until he has relaxed his vigilance and a decisive blow can
> suddenly be dealt" (Malamat 1978, 14).

On the seventh day when the Israelites came to march there would have been less

anticipation among the people of Jericho than there had been in the first few days. Near

the end of the Israelites' first lap the people of Jericho might have even breathed a

collective sigh of relief. This behavior was odd, but no one was being hurt. Then the

Israelites started a second lap around the city. The people of Jericho would have been

taken back by this change in the routine of the past week. With each lap the confusion

and panic within the people of Jericho would build. They did not know exactly what was coming, but they felt a sense of impending doom. They knew that this day was not like the others, something was going to happen today.

> Why did Joshua order the army to appear each day and encircle the city in silence presumably standing silently in place for hours only to withdraw to their camps without attacking? The answer may be that Joshua was attempting to weaken the will of the enemy by increasing the fear and uncertainty that Rahab the prostitute and the Israelite scouts had detected earlier. . . . Joshua's repeated encirclement at Jericho was probably designed to increase the enemy commander's uncertainty even as it heightened the fear within the garrison. (Gabriel 2003, 131)

In the story the Israelites' shout after the seventh lap would have been shocking to the people of Jericho because all of the previous laps were completed in silence. When the Israelites stormed the city the hearts of the people of Jericho would already 'quaking'[134] and they would have offered almost no resistance.

In Joshua 10 the Israelite army is portrayed surprising the Amorite armies by traveling all night to attack them at Gibeon. The element of surprise left the Amorites confused and defenseless.

> At the battle of Gibeon, the bold Israelite plan of action is unfolded in a single biblical verse: "So Joshua came upon them suddenly, having marched up all night from Gilgal" (in the Jordan valley) (Joshua 10:9). Exploiting the night, the Israelites made a lightning march of some 25-30 kilometres and involving a climb of over a thousand metres, all under the cover of darkness. The actual attack apparently took place at dawn, when the astonished Canaanites were facing the walls of Gibeon (which they have been besieging), with their rear and flanks exposed most dangerously to the assailing Israelites (Malamat 1978, 20-21).

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[134] The quaking of the people of Jericho began before the Israelites circumabulated the walls of Jericho. In Jos 2:24 the spies Joshua sent out came back to him and told him that the people of Jericho were already afraid of the Israelites. "They said to Joshua, 'The Lord has delivered the whole land into our power; in fact, all of the inhabitants of the land are quaking before us.'"

Another portrayal of confusion and intimidation is found in Judges 7 when Gideon is pictured attacking the Midianite forces without a conventional army or conventional weapons.

> He divided the three hundred men into three columns and equipped every man with a ram's horn and an empty jar, with a torch in each jar. "Watch me," he said, "and do the same. When I get to the outposts of the camp, do exactly as I do. When I and all those with me blow our horns, you too, all around the camp, will blow your horns and shout, 'For the LORD and for Gideon!'" Gideon and the hundred men with him arrived at the outposts of the camp, at the beginning of the middle watch, just after the sentries were posted. They sounded the horns and smashed the jars that they had with them, and the three columns blew their horns and broke their jars. Holding the torches in their left hands and the horns for blowing in their right hands, they shouted, "A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!" They remained standing where they were, surrounding the camp; but the entire camp ran about yelling, and took to flight. For when the three hundred horns were sounded, the LORD turned every man's sword against his fellow, throughout the camp, and the entire host fled as far as Beth-shittah and on to Zererah—as far as the outskirts of Abel-meholah near Tabbath. (Judg 7:16-22)

In the book of Judges Israelite warriors were depicted using common items like an ox goad, a donkey's jawbone, a tent peg, a sling and a millstone as weapons.[135] YHWH led Gideon to take this paucity of weaponry a step further by using torches, pots and trumpets to wage psychological warfare with the Midianites. "The tactic was to spread panic throughout the camp, and this was done by noise (horns) and the display of lights" (Hobbs 168).

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[135] "As with many of the items associated with warfare in ancient Israel, there is a distinction to be made in the use of weapons in the period before the monarchy, and the period during the monarchy. References to weapons used by Israel in the book of Judges are few and far between, and it is clear that Israelite warrior were ill-supplied with 'conventional' weapons of the day. There are no references to Israelite spears, bows, shields, javelins, axes, maces in this early period, and there is no reference to protective body armour" (Hobbs 111).

Yigael Yadin believed that the torches would have done more than just cause confusion, that they could be used to burn the tents of the Midianite army.[136] A fragment of a relief taken from Ashurbanipal's palace at Ninevah shows Assyrian soldiers sacking and burning Arabian tents in battle; so this type of action must not have been foreign to battle plans in the ancient Near East.

Yadin also felt that because of the use of psychological warfare the size of the Midianite force would be a weakness rather than a strength. "The Midianites came from the east, across the Jordan. Their principal weakness, in war, was that they bivouacked in large noisy encampments, which could be easily surprised by stealthy attack. And when they were, panic and pandemonium would roar through the camp like a forest fire, fuelled by the confused terror of the women and children. Gideon took account of these factors in planning his operation" (Yadin 1963, 258).

A surprise attack would leave the Midianites unsure of who was friend or foe. The soldiers would begin to act with a sense of self-preservation rather than following the grand plan of military conquest. Hobbs sums up the Israelites' psychological tactics well: "The battles Israel fought in this period were a combination of surprise tactics and panic caused by the use of these tactics, so that the confused enemy inflicted more damage upon himself than did the Israelites (111).

In 1 Samuel 7 we find an instance of accidental psychological warfare. Israel appeared to be arraying themselves for battle against the Philistines, when in fact they

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[136] "The torches were the most appropriate device for destroying the 'fortifications' of the enemy – his tents. This was the method also used by the Assyrians, centuries later, against wandering Arab tribes in the desert, who also moved with their cattle and camels and bivouacked in tents" (Yadin 1963, 259).

called a religious assembly to recommit themselves to YHWH. The Biblical author wrote that the assembly followed the Israelites' loss of the Ark of the Covenant to the Philistines at Eben-ezer, and their recovery of it when the Philistines sent it back. The Israelites' assembly at Mizpah was misunderstood as an act of psychological warfare intended to cause fear in the Philistines. This accidental impression inspired the Philistines to array themselves against Israel which truly did strike fear in the hearts of the Israelites. The author recounts that YHWH came to the Israelites' aid and they defeated the Philistines.

1 Samuel 13 depicts that the Philistine army arrayed their troops in such a way that it caused the Israelites to literally run and hide. King Saul killed a Philistine official, which angered the Philistines. The Israelites realized that they had incurred the wrath of the Philistines and they gathered for battle. "The Philistines, in turn, gathered to attack Israel: 30,000 chariots and 6,000 horsemen, and troops as numerous as the sands of the seashore. They marched up and encamped at Michmas, east of Beth-aven. When the men of Israel saw that they were in trouble—for the troops were hard pressed—the people hid in caves, among thorns, among rocks, in tunnels, and in cisterns" (1 Sam 13:5-6).

In 2 Chronicles 20 when the Judean king Jehoshaphat is faced with the prospect of battle with a coalition of transjordanian forces he is credited with proclaiming a fast (2 Chr 20:1-2). The Biblical author relates that Judah came to realize that YHWH was on its side in this battle. "After taking counsel with the people, he stationed singers to the LORD extolling the One majestic in holiness as they went forth ahead of the vanguard, saying, 'Praise the LORD, for His steadfast love is eternal.' As they began their joyous

shouts and hymns, the LORD set ambushes for the men of Amon, Moab, and the hill

country of Seir, who were marching against Judah, and they were routed" (2 Chr 20:21-

22).

Singers positioned along the way to battle would have stirred both Judah and the

coalition of forces, imbuing them with a sense of purpose and power as they marched into

battle for YHWH, "the One majestic in holiness." The Philistines would have wondered

at the sounds of singing rolling through the valley of Ein-gedi.

These last two references to the display or array of forces are not about specific

instances of psychological warfare but rather descriptions of the display of troops. In The

Song of Songs 6 we find this description of a beautiful woman

> You are beautiful, my darling, as Tirzah,
> Comely as Jerusalem,
> Awesome as bannered hosts. (Song 6:4)

This beautiful woman is being compared to the strength and power displayed by an army

that is ready for battle with their banners unfurled and weapons ready. There is a sense of

immediacy, urgency, restlessness, willingness and devotion portrayed in this description.

In Nahum 2 we find a description of the display of the Ninevite troops:

> His warriors' shields are painted red,
> And the soldiers are clothed in crimson;
> The chariots are like flaming torches,
> On the day they are made ready.
> The [arrows of] cypress wood are poisoned.
> The chariots dash about frenzied in the fields,
> They rush through the meadows,
> They appear like torches,
> They race like streaks of lightning. (Nahum 2:4-5)

The depiction of the Ninevite troops is resplendent with color, action, danger and light.

The reader can easily imagine the flourishes of red and bursts of light coming from from

the shields, uniforms, chariots and weaponry. This display would have been impressive and daunting to an opposing force.

6. Conclusion

Physical intimidation is the most obvious form of psychological warfare since it involves physical actions which affect others.   As we explored physical intimidation in the Hebrew Bible we surveyed terrorism – harming a few to send a message to many; humiliating a leader – hoping to break the will of the rest of the force by maiming or assassinating their leader(s); shaming – exposing weakness in themselves or others to gain a military advantage; and the display or array of troops.

Although Assyria is most closely identified with physical intimidation Israel practiced this form of psychological warfare as well. What appeared to be random and sadistic acts were actually calculated decisions designed to leave a lasting impression upon another nation.   When David measured off three lengths of prone Moabites, and killed two lengths of them, he was not simply punishing the condemned; he was seeking the submission of the living Moabites. When Gideon 'threshed' Zebah and Zalmunna with thorns, or when he cut off the thumbs and big toes of Adoni-Bezek, he was leaving enduring physical reminders of Israel's potency.

Next we will examine words and actions that rallied troops to have courage to enter into battle boldly and defeat the enemy at any cost. Rallying the troops is psychological warfare which affects the national troops rather than the opposing force.

V.

RALLYING THE TROOPS IN THE HEBREW BIBLE

1. Introduction

Rallying the troops involved acts or words spoken by a king, an army official, or by a deity that gave an army courage and confidence. Some actions or statements were intended to both disparage the enemy and buoy the spirits of the national troops. Often affirming statements about a nation's gods were incorporated into rallying the troops. Sometimes the words used were negative and meant to induce fear and earnestness in the national troops. In Israel, this negative psychological warfare reminded troops of YHWH's desire for Israel, and that Israel's soldiers were to remain faithful to YHWH's commands in or out of battle.

At the heart of rallying the troops are two groups – the troops and the commander(s). Troop morale and focus is initiated and maintained by military commanders. At times a military commander needed to be encouraged so he would portray confidence to his troops. We will take an excursus which will help us to understand these two groups more fully.

Troops

The troops referred to in the Hebrew Bible were almost exclusively militia; farmers and tradesmen called to military service in times of national distress. During the divided monarchy period Israelite and Judean kings formed standing armies comprised of

paid local soldiers, as well as mercenaries from other regions,[137] but the militia was still

called up for heavy conflicts. So as we examine the makeup and mindset of the Israelite

troops we must remember that these militiamen only fought when needed and had other

occupations, agriculture in particular. Since these troops were militia they needed

training, encouragement and motivation. The basic motivators for these soldiers were

defense of their home and family, service to YHWH[138] and the booty that they might

accrue if the battle were successful. These soldiers were trained in military techniques

but their major training was psychological. They were indoctrinated to be YHWH-

fearing, weapon-wielding, obedient troops that would obey whatever command they were

given. The army commanders needed to know that in the heat of the battle, or in the

exhaustion of pursuit, the soldiers would be confident and focused on the task before

them. Gabriel described some of the obstacles faced by an ancient Near Eastern soldier.

> As the army moved, its general resistance to disease declined. The soldiers were
> subjected to chronic discomfort. As they marched in column, the dust choked
> their lungs, dried out their sinuses, and produced chronic coughing, blinding
> headaches, and severe nosebleeds. Blisters from the leather thongs on the sandals
> or from ill-fitting boots must have been endemic. In hot or cold climates, many of
> the soldiers would die of heat or cold. Others would be so afflicted that their

[137] The use of mercenaries was a double-edged sword, they provided additional warriors, but could also affect troop morale negatively. Gerhard von Rad notes that the use of mercenaries could have affected the troops' primary motivation, a sense that this was a Holy War being fought for YHWH. "Could this band of soldiers—international or at least partly recruited out of previously Canaanite territories—understand their wars as a sacral event, as a mobilizing of the God of Israel? And if not, were there then two conceptions of war: among the mercenaries, a secular, and in the militia, a sacred?" (Rad 78).

[138] Diamond defines religion "as an ideology that manipulates group members to become peaceful and obedient internally, and suicidally brave when it comes to external warfare. Speaking more generally and less cynically, advanced societies have somehow hit upon ways to trigger the affiliative instinct by cues such as a shared faith or language or way of life, or common deference to a charismatic leader" (Hirshleifer 463).

health would be damaged permanently. Then, as now, warfare tended to be dangerous to the soldier's health" (Gabriel 2005, 40).

The soldiers also needed to have confidence in each other, and animosity toward the opposing troops.[139] This was accomplished by denigrating the opposition and exalting fellow troops. Encouragement from military leaders not only aimed to strengthen the individual soldiers, it was also focused upon developing camaraderie. The soldiers were given the same motivators and encouragement. The hope was that they would spur each other on to success in battle. In support of this position Yadin argues that, "the spirit, the morale is the most important element from the military aspect. There is none more important. This element makes possible the seemingly impossible" (Yadin 1965, 9).

In battle situations everyone was tired, everyone was scared, the question was who had the most stamina, desire, and will. Victory often went to the side having the "surplus of moral stamina and physical force, enhanced by the natural elation that resulted from victory in battle" (Herzog 56).

Commanders

Because they were revered, and even feared, an army's military leaders were rallying points for their troops. Carl von Clausewitz, a military strategist who lived in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, described the impact of the military leader in these terms.

> As the forces in one individual after another become prostrated, and can no longer be excited and supported by an effort of his own will, the whole inertia of the mass rests its weight on the Will of the Commander: by the spark in his breast, by

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[139] "From ancient to modern times human beings have possessed an affiliative instinct: a readiness to divide the world between 'us' and 'them'" (Hirshleifer 462).

the light of his spirit, the spark of purpose, the light of hope, must be kindled afresh in others: in so far only as he is equal to this, he stands above the masses and continues to be their master: whenever that influence ceases . . . the masses drawing him down with them sink into the lower regions of animal nature which shrinks from danger and knows not shame. (Clausewitz 55)

Military leaders were given the responsibilities of preparing their troops physically and psychologically for battle, preparing a battle plan, and leading the troops into battle.[140] Military leaders led their troops through their words of challenge and encouragement, and they led their troops physically by their actions. "A commander's place during battle must be where the most critical decisions are being taken" (Herzog 53). The troops' responsibility was to obey the call and command of military leaders

The relationship between military leaders and soldiers is synergistic; each is constantly gauging the emotional state of the other. Effective military leaders must control their emotions, expressing strong emotion at crucial times to rally their troops. A military leader must portray confidence and hope which motivates his troops. "It is expected of officers that they will possess certain qualities and strengths of character which will inspire the mass of the troops to obey them and to put their lives in mortal danger" (Hobbs 89).

Monarchic nations typically had a commander of the military who led the troops under the authority and direction of the king. As portrayed in the Bible, prior to the monarchial period Israel's military commanders were typically charismatic leaders, who called up the militia to respond to a military threat and then returned to their previous

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[140] "In battle every time a soldier obeys an order to engage the enemy the chances of him getting killed increase. It therefore requires a particular kind of individual to ask others to expose themselves to such great danger, and a particular kind of individual who will willingly accede to the request" (Hobbs 89).

lives like the rest of the militia. Whether a commander was operating as temporary

charismatic leader or under the authority of a king he was still responsible to prepare and

lead the troops.

One of the most valuable functions of the military leader was to symbolize the

grand plan of the military endeavor, and to remind troops not be distracted from the task

before them. The leader focused his troops on the matter at hand. It was not uncommon

for an army to begin a battle and then become distracted by issues of self-preservation

and self-gain. For example, at the battle of Megiddo Thutmosis III[141] was forced to resort

to siege warfare "after the Canaanites had fled from the field, and the Egyptian army had

lost its discipline and not pursued them. Instead, they had become distracted by the

promise of loot from the abandoned Canaanite chariots" (Hobbs, 177).

Israel's greatest military successes came as the troops rallied around their leader.

"Strictly speaking, the will to obey military superiors (and to act 'above and beyond the

call of duty') is of greater importance than the will to fight …" (Speier 439).

The preparation for battle involved both military training and psychological

training. We will now examine Israel's psychological training which is exemplified in

Deuteronomy 20.

Deuteronomy 20: "The War Chapter"

The ritual the Biblical author described in this chapter elucidates YHWH's

expectations of troop preparation and war-time conduct. "Ceremonies were instituted to

instill martial spirit in sometimes reluctant conscripts, as were regulations governing

troop selection on psychiatric grounds and camp hygiene. Last, the Israelite army

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[141] The Battle of Megiddo, ANET, 234-238.

assumed a combat formation that permitted it to protect itself as it moved from one place to another" (Gabriel 2003, 95).[142]

> When you take the field against your enemies and see horses and chariots—forces larger than yours—have no fear of them, for the LORD your God, who brought you from the land of Egypt, is with you. Before you join battle, the priest shall come forward and address the troops. He shall say to them, "Hear, O Israel! You are about to join battle with your enemy. Let not your courage falter. Do not be in fear, or in panic, or in dread of them. For it is the LORD your God who marches with you to do battle for you against your enemy, to bring you victory." (Deut 20:1-4)

From the outset it is evident that the Israelite army was not alone. "One element of this human dimension is morale, and Deuteronomy 20:1-4 notes the moral strength that can clearly result from the soldier's faith in God" (Gabriel 2003, 91). YHWH was with them and "marches with you to do battle for you against your enemy, to bring you victory." The religious element is further accentuated by the fact that the first person to address the troops was the priest. These first words set the tone for the rest of the instructions to the soldiers. YHWH is with them, and they can win battles despite the size and weaponry of opposing forces. The troops were encouraged to have no fear ירא of them (Deut 20:1), or let their courage falter רכך; or have fear ירא, panic חפז, or dread ערץ (Deut 20:3).

This text pictures the Israelite troops being indoctrinated with the idea that YHWH, their all powerful national deity, was with them and expected them to be focused upon obedience more than anything else. "By making these people believe that: 'they are in contact with the ultimate powers of existence, ideology will greatly reinforce their motivation to act. They will gain courage from perceiving themselves as part of a cosmic

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[142] For related rituals in the ancient Near East see pages 41-43 of this dissertation.

scheme; actions that they would not dare to envisage before will now have the legitimacy which proximity to the sacred provides'" (Shils "Ideology").

After the priest set the tone for the instruction of the troops the officials addressed the troops. They addressed the cares that some of the soldiers might bring into battle that would distract them from giving their very best for YHWH and Israel. Soldiers were encouraged to return home if they had recently built a home, planted a vineyard, gotten engaged,[143] or if they were just frightened (Deut 20:5-9). The army officials did not want cares or fears to distract the troops. A soldier was given opportunity to leave "lest the courage of his comrades flag like his" (Deut 20: 8).

Motivation of the troops was key – the soldiers had to know that they were not fighting alone, YHWH was fighting with them, and they could win the battle regardless of the odds. The soldiers also needed to be focused on battle-related issues only. Half-hearted soldiers would bring about half-hearted fighting and would affect the morale of other soldiers.[144]

> When you approach a town to attack it, you shall offer it terms of peace. If it responds peaceably and lets you in, all the people present there shall serve you at forced labor. If it does not surrender to you, but would join battle with you, you shall lay siege to it; and when the LORD your God delivers it into your hand, you

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[143] Cf. Deut. 24:5 "When a man has taken a bride, he shall not go out with the army or be assigned to it for any purpose; he shall be exempt one year for the sake of his household, to give happiness to the woman he has married."

[144] "All of these conditions are the kinds of problems that are likely to affect young men, the conscripts called to war, and not the more seasoned military professionals that comprised the warriors of the old habiru. The army of Israel was becoming a national army and now had to deal with problems of morale, fighting spirit, and psychiatric collapse that have afflicted all conscript armies from time immemorial. In requiring troop commanders to examine their troops according to a list of conditions that could reduce troop morale and fighting spirit, the Israelites may have introduced the first practical method of conducting military psychiatric screening" (Gabriel 2003, 91).

shall put all its males to the sword. You may, however, take as your booty the women, the children, the livestock, and everything in the town—all its spoil—and enjoy the use of the spoil of your enemy, which the LORD your God gives you. (Deut 20:10-14)

Now the author shifts focus from the soldiers to the battle itself. The Israelite troops already understood YHWH's perspective of them, now the troops would come to understand YHWH's view of the enemy. First, if possible, there should be peace. They are encouraged to offer the town "terms of peace" קרא שלום (lit. 'proclaim peace'). If the town did not want to accept the terms of peace, which included servitude to Israel, then the army was to besiege the town and when they had taken it, kill all the males and take what they wanted for booty.

> Thus you shall deal with all towns that lie very far from you, towns that do not belong to nations hereabout. In the towns of the latter peoples, however, which the LORD your God is giving you as a heritage, you shall not let a soul remain alive. No, you must proscribe them—the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites—as the LORD your God has commanded you, lest they lead you into doing all the abhorrent things that they have done for their gods and you stand guilty before the LORD your God. (Deut 20:15-18)

Distant nations could live, but the nearest peoples, the indigenous Canaanites, were to be 'proscribed' or annihilated - which is what made the Gibeonite deception[145] so meaningful, they were part of the peoples who were to be annihilated.[146]

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[145] See this dissertation, on page 65, for further treatment of the Gibeonites.

[146] Cf. Deut 7:1-8, 16-26.
"For the modern reader, the conquest of Canaan, with all its attendant slaughter, is the most problematic moment in the history of ancient Israel. (…) Both the priestly authors of Leviticus and the Deuteronomists are careful to give God moral reasons for his commandments to drive out or exterminate the seven nations. (…) and the argument is repeated and insisted upon in a way that has led some commentators to conclude that Israel had a bad conscience about the conquest. (…) One might more easily argue that it is the duty of conscientious Israelites to join in the bloody business of the conquest and to show no mercy" (Walzer 215).

When in your war against a city you have to besiege it a long time in order to capture it, you must not destroy its trees, wielding the ax against them. You may eat of them, but you must not cut them down. Are trees of the field human to withdraw before you into the besieged city? Only trees that you know do not yield food may be destroyed; you may cut them down for constructing siegeworks against the city that is waging war on you, until it has been reduced. (Deut 20:19-20)

This is an interesting end to the acts of war chapter. The author conveys that the Israelites were forbidden to devastate the fruit trees near towns that they besieged.[147] This could have been out of respect for the trees themselves, it could have been out of respect for those who live near the city and eat from the trees,[148] or this could have been an economic decision which left a defeated people with the means to pay tribute. Regardless, the Israelites were forbidden to do something that was practiced by other ancient Near Eastern armies.[149]

Troops were inspired to perform at high levels through words and actions. Commanders searched for the right motivators to spur their troops on to great achievements. We now turn our attention to the use of words to rally troops.

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[147] Cf. Elisha's prophecy against Moab in 2 Kings 3:15-25.

[148] "The propriety of wars fought to subjugate others and enjoy what can be plundered from them is simply accepted as a given fact of public life. The fruits of such victories, including the slave labor of conquered peoples, are understood to be gifts of Yahweh (v. 14). For this very reason, the dangers of war are not to undermine one's enjoyment of life's sweetest blessings (vv. 6-7). Respect for noncombatants (vv. 11, 14) and the necessities of life (vv. 19-20) prohibit the atrocities all too common in the prosecution of warfare (2 Kgs 8:12; 15:16; Hos 10:14; 14:1 [ET 13:16]; Amos 1:13; Isa 13:16; Nah 3:10; Ps 137:8-9). If the spoils of war can be enjoyed without bloodshed, peaceful submission is preferable (vv. 10-11); if not, the onus for choosing violence lies squarely upon the enemy (cf. "makes war with you," v. 12)" (Nelson 248).

[149] See page 31 of this dissertation for an example of the destruction of trees in the ancient Near East.

2. Rallying commanders and troops through the use of words

A military leader represented the cause of the entire nation and the nation's god(s) when he spoke to the troops. It was incumbent upon him to express clearly and pointedly the military objectives and what the troops needed to do to accomplish those objectives.

<u>Moses</u>

The Moses narratives present him explaining to the Israelites that they would be mighty warriors if they served YHWH wholeheartedly. He regularly reminded them that because of YHWH they could defeat other nations against any odds. One form that this encouragement took is found in Leviticus 26: 7-8 "You shall give chase to your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword. Five of you shall give chase to a hundred, and a hundred of you shall give chase to ten thousand; your enemies shall fall before you by the sword."[150]

In Numbers 14 Moses is portrayed doing the opposite of rallying the troops, he discouraged the Israelites from attacking the Canaanites since YHWH had not yet commanded them to do so. When the spies brought back their reports about the land of Canaan, Joshua and Caleb encouraged the Israelites to take the land, while the other ten spies discouraged the people. Moses warned that they would wander in the desert for forty years until that generation was dead. The people were upset at this divine sentence and they attempted to attack the Canaanites without YHWH's blessing. Moses tried to dissuade the Israelites:

> But Moses said, "Why do you transgress the LORD`s command? This will
> not succeed. Do not go up, lest you be routed by your enemies, for the LORD is
> not in your midst. For the Amalekites and the Canaanites will be there to face

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[150] Cf. Deut 32:30, Josh 23:10, Isa 30:17.

you, and you will fall by the sword, inasmuch as you have turned from following the LORD and the LORD will not be with you."

Yet defiantly they marched toward the crest of the hill country, though neither the LORD`s Ark of the Covenant nor Moses stirred from the camp. And the Amalekites and the Canaanites who dwelt in that hill country came down and dealt them a shattering blow at Hormah. (Num 14:41-45)

In Numbers 21, YHWH is depicted telling Moses that the Israelites would defeat Og of Bashan, just as they had defeated Sihon of the Amorites. Moses certainly would have relayed this message on to the troops. This message was especially relevant because YHWH referred to a previous victory which gave them a frame of reference related to past success.

Then Moses sent to spy out Jazer, and they captured its dependencies and dispossessed the Amorites who were there. They marched on and went up the road to Bashan, and King Og of Bashan, with all his people, came out to Edrei to engage them in battle. But the LORD said to Moses, "Do not fear him, for I give him and all his people and his land into your hand. You shall do to him as you did to Sihon king of the Amorites who dwelt in Heshbon." They defeated him and his sons and all his people, until no remnant was left him; and they took possession of his country. (Num 21:32-35)

This outcome was very different from the instance found in Numbers 14. In both cases the author portrays Moses relaying YHWH's thoughts about the viability of an attack, rather than his own.

Deuteronomy is replete with instances of YHWH telling Israel not to be afraid. In the early chapters of Deuteronomy, the author portrays Moses recounting past victories that YHWH had given the Israelites. Then Moses reminded Israel not to fear because YHWH would fight with them. In Deuteronomy 1 we find Moses challenging the Israelites with these words.

"See, the LORD your God has placed the land at your disposal. Go up, take possession, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, promised you. Fear not and be not dismayed (…) I said to you, 'Have no dread or fear of them. None other than the LORD your God, who goes before you, will fight for you, just as He did for

you in Egypt before your very eyes, and in the wilderness, where you saw how the LORD your God carried you, as a man carries his son, all the way that you traveled until you came to this place. Yet for all that, you have no faith in the LORD your God'" (Deut 1:21, 29-32).

Again in Deuteronomy 2 the author portrays Moses speaking for YHWH when he said,

"Up! Set out across the wadi Arnon! See, I give into your power Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his land. Begin the occupation: engage him in battle. This day I begin to put the dread and fear of you upon the peoples everywhere under heaven, so that they shall tremble and quake because of you whenever they hear you mentioned" (…) "King Sihon of Heshbon refused to let us pass through, because the LORD had stiffened his will and hardened his heart in order to deliver him into your power—as is now the case. And the LORD said to me: See, I begin by placing Sihon and his land at your disposal. Begin the occupation; take possession of his land" (Deut 2:24-25, 30-31).

In Deuteronomy 3 the author wrote that Moses said, "I also charged Joshua at that time, saying, 'You have seen with your own eyes all that the LORD your God has done to these two kings; so shall the LORD do to all the kingdoms into which you shall cross over. Do not fear them, for it is the LORD your God who will battle for you'" (Deut 3:21-22). Moses' confidence in all these cases came from the idea that YHWH would be involved in the battles.[151]

In Deuteronomy 4, the narrator portrays Moses encouraging the Israelites to keep in mind the unique relationship between YHWH and Israel as they battled to inhabit the land of Canaan (Deut 4:1, 5) and as they settled in the land.

You have but to inquire about bygone ages that came before you, ever since God created man on earth, from one end of heaven to the other: has anything as grand as this ever happened, or has its like ever been known? Has any people heard the voice of a god speaking out of a fire, as you have, and survived? Or has any god ventured to go and take for himself one nation from the midst of another by

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[151] We will address YHWH's divine intervention in Israel's battles more fully on pages 156-181.

prodigious acts, by signs and portents, by war, by a mighty and an outstretched arm and awesome power, as the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your very eyes? It has been clearly demonstrated to you that the LORD alone is God; there is none beside Him. From the heavens He let you hear His voice to discipline you; on earth He let you see His great fire; and from amidst that fire you heard His words. And because He loved your fathers, He chose their heirs after them; He Himself, in His great might, led you out of Egypt, to drive from your path nations greater and more populous than you, to take you into their land and assign it to you as a heritage, as is still the case. Know therefore this day and keep in mind that the LORD alone is God in heaven above and on earth below; there is no other. [152] (Deut 4:32-39)

In Deuteronomy 6 Moses reminded Israel that YHWH would fight with them if they were righteous. "Do what is right and good in the sight of the LORD, that it may go well with you and that you may be able to possess the good land that the LORD your God promised on oath to your fathers, and that all your enemies may be driven out before you, as the LORD has spoken" (Deut 6:18-19).

Then in Deuteronomy 25 Moses reminded the Israelites of Amalek's earlier opposition and encouraged the Israelites to take revenge upon the Amalekites when YHWH gives them the land of Canaan.

Remember what Amalek did to you on your journey, after you left Egypt— how, undeterred by fear of God, he surprised you on the march, when you were famished and weary, and cut down all the stragglers in your rear. Therefore, when the LORD your God grants you safety from all your enemies around you, in the land that the LORD your God is giving you as a hereditary portion, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven. Do not forget! (Deut 25:17-19)

The promise of military success was part of the blessing and curse formula that the Biblical author wrote about in Deuteronomy 28. Moses encouraged the Israelites that they would be blessed if they remained true to YHWH: "The LORD will put to rout

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[152] Cf. Deuteronomy 4:7-8 "For what great nation is there that has a god so close at hand as is the LORD our God whenever we call upon Him? Or what great nation has laws and rules as perfect as all this Teaching that I set before you this day?"

before you the enemies who attack you; they will march out against you by a single road, but flee from you by many roads" (Deut 28:7). Then he cautioned them that curses, including military defeat, would ensue if they were not true to YHWH: "The LORD will put you to rout before your enemies; you shall march out against them by a single road, but flee from them by many roads; and you shall become a horror to all the kingdoms of the earth. Your carcasses shall become food for all the birds of the sky and all the beasts of the earth, with none to frighten them off" (Deut 28:25-26).

In Deuteronomy 31 Moses is portrayed telling the Israelites and Joshua to be strong and resolute three times. This chapter appears to explicate a ritual which would encourage both Joshua and the Israelites to be brave in the coming battles. First, Moses spoke to the new generation of Israelites who were about to attempt to conquer Canaan.

> Moses went and spoke these things to all Israel. He said to them: I am now one hundred and twenty years old, I can no longer be active. Moreover, the LORD has said to me, "You shall not go across yonder Jordan." The LORD your God Himself will cross over before you; and He Himself will wipe out those nations from your path and you shall dispossess them. —Joshua is the one who shall cross before you, as the LORD has spoken. — The LORD will do to them as He did to Sihon and Og, kings of the Amorites, and to their countries, when He wiped them out. The LORD will deliver them up to you, and you shall deal with them in full accordance with the Instruction that I have enjoined upon you. Be strong and resolute, be not in fear or in dread of them; for the LORD your God Himself marches with you: He will not fail you or forsake you. (Deut 31:1-6)

Then Moses is pictured speaking specifically to Joshua in the presence of the Israelites. "Then Moses called Joshua and said to him in the sight of all Israel: 'Be strong and resolute, for it is you who shall go with this people into the land that the LORD swore to their fathers to give them, and it is you who shall apportion it to them. And the LORD Himself will go before you. He will be with you; He will not fail you or forsake you. Fear not and be not dismayed!'" (Deut 31:7-8).

In Deuteronomy 33 in the author exalted YHWH and the Israelites, and demeaned Israel's future enemies: Moses said, "O happy Israel! Who is like you, A people delivered by the LORD, Your protecting Shield, your Sword triumphant! Your enemies shall come cringing before you, and you shall tread on their backs" (Deut 33:29).

Joshua

The Biblical author depicted YHWH using Moses to bestow authority upon Joshua as the new commander of the Israelites. Since the Israelites would follow him into battle Joshua had to exemplify strength and resolve. "And He charged Joshua son of Nun: 'Be strong and resolute: for you shall bring the Israelites into the land that I promised them on oath, and I will be with you'" (Deut 31:23).

In Joshua 1 Moses has died and Joshua is the new leader of Israel. YHWH is pictured coming to Joshua three times and echoing what Moses said to Joshua prior to his death, 'be strong and resolute'.

> No one shall be able to resist you as long as you live. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you. "Be strong and resolute, for you shall apportion to this people the land that I swore to their fathers to assign to them. But you must be very strong and resolute to observe faithfully all the Teaching that My servant Moses enjoined upon you. Do not deviate from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Let not this Book of the Teaching cease from your lips, but recite it day and night, so that you may observe faithfully all that is written in it. Only then will you prosper in your undertakings and only then will you be successful. "I charge you: Be strong and resolute; do not be terrified or dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go." (Josh 1:5-11)

Why would Joshua need such specific affirmation if his strength and courage was not an issue? It appears that Joshua had to be convinced of his capability to lead in Moses' stead. At the end of the chapter even the Israelites are portrayed telling Joshua to 'be strong and resolute' (Josh 1:18).

In Joshua 10 the author indicates that Joshua has internalized these encouraging admonishments and is now encouraging the other military leaders with him as they are deciding the fate of five captured Amorite kings. "Do not be frightened or dismayed; be firm and resolute. For this is what the LORD is going to do to all the enemies with whom you are at war" (Josh 10:25).

In Joshua 1, Joshua is depicted establishing his authority not only by speaking for YHWH but by dictating the division of the land following the battle, in which he demonstrates complete confidence in victory. "Joshua thereupon gave orders to the officials of the people: 'Go through the camp and charge the people thus: Get provisions ready, for in three days' time you are to cross the Jordan, in order to enter and possess the land that the LORD your God is giving you as a possession'" (Josh 1:10-11). At the end of Joshua 1 we see that Joshua's speech had worked and the people assent to his command. (Josh 1:16-18)

Joshua is shown sending out spies as Moses had one generation earlier. The author presents their report in Joshua 2:24, "They said to Joshua, 'The LORD has delivered the whole land into our power; in fact, all the inhabitants of the land are quaking before us'" (Josh 2:24). These words were a tremendous encouragement to Joshua and all the other Israelites. The Israelites could move forward with their plans knowing that YHWH was supporting them and that the inhabitants of the land were already in fear of Israel.

In Joshua 3 we see Joshua encouraging the Israelites as they approached the Jordan River. He reminded them that they obtained YHWH's favor because they remained pure and they were preceded by the Ark of the Covenant.

And Joshua said to the people, "Purify yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will perform wonders in your midst." Then Joshua ordered the priests, "Take up the Ark of the Covenant and advance to the head of the people." And they took up the Ark of the Covenant and marched at the head of the people. The LORD said to Joshua, "This day, for the first time, I will exalt you in the sight of all Israel, so that they shall know that I will be with you as I was with Moses. For your part, command the priests who carry the Ark of the Covenant as follows: When you reach the edge of the waters of the Jordan, make a halt in the Jordan." And Joshua said to the Israelites, "Come closer and listen to the words of the LORD your God. By this," Joshua continued, "you shall know that a living God is among you, and that He will dispossess for you the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites, and Jebusites: the Ark of the Covenant of the Sovereign of all the earth is advancing before you into the Jordan. (Joshua 3:5-11)

The battle portrayed against Jericho in Joshua 6 challenged Joshua's leadership and the Israelites' obedience. He told Israel to battle in a very unconventional manner, by circumambulating the city repeatedly over seven days and shouting after the final lap. Joshua's instructions were terse and direct. The author depicts the Israelites as fully engaged in Joshua's leadership because they believed that YHWH was guiding him. First, he spoke to them about YHWH's presence in the battle via the Ark of the Covenant. "Go forward, march around the city, with the vanguard marching in front of the Ark of the LORD" (Josh 6:7). Then, he challenged them in a very specific way. "Do not shout, do not let your voices be heard, and do not let a sound issue from your lips until the moment that I command you, 'Shout!' Then you shall shout" (Josh 6:10). Their absolute obedience would ensure YHWH's presence in the battle. Lastly, when the time was right they were to reverse their silence, which was again indicative of full reliance upon Joshua and YHWH, "On the seventh round, as the priests blew the horns, Joshua commanded the people, 'Shout! For the LORD has given you the city'" (Josh 6:16).

<u>Gideon</u>

In Judges 6 the Biblical author wrote that YHWH called Gideon to be a military

leader who would lead the Israelites to triumph over the invading Midianite forces.

YHWH's messenger spoke to Gideon as he was hiding in a wine press secretly threshing

wheat out of the sight of the Midianites, "The LORD is with you, valiant warrior!" (Judg

6:12). Of course, at that time Gideon was anything but a valiant warrior. YHWH was

expressing both his confidence in Gideon and his commitment to use Gideon for his

purposes.

> The angel of the LORD appeared to him and said to him, "The LORD is with you,
> valiant warrior!" Gideon said to him, "Please, my lord, if the LORD is with us,
> why has all this befallen us? Where are all His wondrous deeds about which our
> fathers told us, saying, 'Truly the LORD brought us up from Egypt'? Now the
> LORD has abandoned us and delivered us into the hands of Midian!" The LORD
> turned to him and said, "Go in this strength of yours and deliver Israel from the
> Midianites. I herewith make you My messenger." He said to Him, "Please, my
> lord, how can I deliver Israel? Why, my clan is the humblest in Manasseh, and I
> am the youngest in my father's household." The LORD replied, "I will be with
> you, and you shall defeat Midian to a man." (Judg 6:12-16)

Gideon was finally convinced to attack and defeat thousands of Midianites with only 300

men. Gideon was transformed into the valiant warrior foretold by YHWH's messenger.

In Judges 7 when Gideon was preparing to go into battle with the Midianites he is

portrayed proclaiming to the Israelites "Come on! The LORD has delivered the Midianite

camp into your hands!" (Judg 7:15). Gideon overheard some of the Midianite soldiers

talking and he knew that they were in fear of Gideon and YHWH. His words to the

Israelites were full of confidence and carried a sense of divine destiny in them. The 300

Israelite warriors were able to defeat thousands of Midianites by causing confusion with

horns and torches. Each step of this unconventional battle is preceded by Gideon's words

of encouragement (Judg 7:16-22). [153]

Pre-Monarchial

Not all rallying of the troops led to an Israelite victory. In 1 Samuel 4 the

Philistines and Israelites were pictured arrayed against each other in battle formation.

The Israelites chose to use the Ark of the Covenant as a quasi-magical aid in their battle

against the Philistines so they brought the Ark into their camp. When the Ark came into

the camp the Israelites gave a mighty shout which frightened the Philistines because they

thought the Israelite god had come into the Israelites' camp. The narrator portrayed the

Philistines challenging each other to stand firm snd eventually the Philistines won the

battle.

> "And they cried, "Woe to us! Nothing like this has ever happened before. Woe to
> us! Who will save us from the power of this mighty God? He is the same God
> who struck the Egyptians with every kind of plague in the wilderness! Brace
> yourselves and be men, O Philistines! Or you will become slaves to the Hebrews
> as they were slaves to you. Be men and fight!" (1 Sam 4:7-9).

 Monarchial

In 2 Samuel 10, Hanun of Ammon had shamed King David's men.[154] The

Biblical author wrote that David arranged for his courtiers to be cared for appropriately

and Joab prepared to avenge the wrong that was done to the courtiers, David, Israel and

YHWH. Joab exhorted his troops "Let us be strong and resolute for the sake of our

people and the land of our God; and the LORD will do what He deems right" (2 Sam

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[153] For further treatment of this passage refer to pages 148-149 and 173 in this
dissertation.

[154] For further treatment of this passage see pages 108-110 in this dissertation.

10:12). Joab's words were weighty, representing national and divine interests rather than

his own opinions or emotions. His exhortation is especially stark because "professional

fighters" or international mercenaries (2 Sam 10:7) were involved as well.[155]

In 2 Samuel 19 after the rebellion led by King David's son Absalom was quelled

and Joab had killed Absalom, David is depicted openly mourning Absalom's death. He

would not publicly acknowledge his troops' sacrifice for him. Joab approached him and

warned him that he risked losing the adulation of his men because of his misplaced

emotions: [156]

> "Today you have humiliated all your followers, who this day saved your life, and
> the lives of your sons and daughters, and the live of your wives and concubines,
> by showing love for those who hate you and hate for those who love you. For you
> have made clear today that the officers and men mean nothing to you. I am sure
> that if Absalom were alive today and the rest of us dead, you would have
> preferred it. Now arise, come out and placate your followers! For I swear by the
> LORD that if you do not come out, not a single man will remain with you
> overnight; and that would be a greater disaster for you than any disaster that has
> befallen you from your youth until now." (2 Sam 19:6-8)

Note the importance of David's presence and approval. The figure of Joab is important

in the role of commander but David's role as king is integral in the encouragement of his

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[155] "These two groups were bound to the king by bonds of common exploits and
shared much the same experience in unorthodox warfare as a means of neutralizing the
superior armament and technical skills of hostile armies. In making the 'Thirties' the
nuclei of his standing army and the spearheads of his campaigns, David imbued his
regular forces with much of the spirit and traditions of the days of pre-regular warfare"
(Herzog 75).
Gerhard von Rad observed, "Joab is the leader of the professional soldiers, but the
war report shows him, in terms of faith, still bound to the old conceptions of holy war"
(Rad 78).

[156] "Several commentators have recognized that the warriors of David have
striven for the king's approval, which should have been given in a triumphal march back
into the city. Because of the lack of that approval and honoring, the warriors are shamed"
(Huber 74).

troops. In this instance David's lack of encouraging words was demotivating to his men

and placed his reign in a precarious situation.

In 1 Kings 20 we find that rallying troops did not always accomplish what a

military leader had hoped. Ahab the king of Israel defeated a coalition led by Ben-Hadad

of Aram in a battle near the fortress of Samaria. Ben-Hadad was then advised that

YHWH was a god of the mountains rather than the plains and that Aramean coalition

would find success against Israel in the plains (1 Kgs 20:23-25). The Aramean troops

were rallied to attack Ahab's forces in the plains, yet they lost again when the battle

ensued.[157]

2 Chronicles 32 relates the story of Judah's King Hezekiah being threatened by

King Sennacherib of Assyria. As has been noted earlier, the Assyrians were known for

their ruthless battle tactics[158] so the inhabitants of Jerusalem were accordingly frightened.

Hezekiah shared soothing and encouraging words with those contained in Jerusalem.

"'Be strong and of good courage; do not be frightened or dismayed by the king of Assyria

or by the horde that is with him, for we have more with us than he has with him. With

him is an arm of flesh, but with us is the LORD our God, to help us and to fight our

battles.' The people were encouraged by the speech of King Hezekiah of Judah" (2 Chr

32:7-8). [159]

In Isaiah 7 the Biblical author shares that Pekah king of Israel allied himself with

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[157] See pages 75-76 of this dissertation for further treatment of this passage.

[158] See pages 27-32 of this dissertation for more details of Assyria's cruelty.

[159] For further treatment of this passage see this dissertation, pages 77-79.

King Rezin of Aram and threatened to attack Ahaz King of Judah.[160] YHWH sent Isaiah

to encourage Ahaz and the people of Judah: "say to him: Be firm and be calm. Do not be

afraid and do not lose heart on account of those two smoking stubs of firebrands, on

account of the raging of Rezin and his Arameans and the son of Remaliah." (Isa 7:4)

Military leaders rallied their troops by reminding them of past successes, or

YHWH's assistance, or the inferiority of the other troops. The troops were also inspired

through the actions of their leaders.

3. Rallying commanders and troops through the use of actions

The actions of a military leader spoke more loudly than his words. Words alone

could sound hollow and powerless. Actions performed by a military leader, or fellow

soldiers, gave substance and validity to inspiring words.

Moses

Our first example of this physical motivation occurs in Exodus 17.[161]

> Amalek came and fought with Israel at Rephidim. Moses said to Joshua, "Pick some men for us, and go out and do battle with Amalek. Tomorrow I will station myself on the top of the hill, with the rod of God in my hand." Joshua did as Moses told him and fought with Amalek, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. Then, whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed; but whenever he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands grew heavy; so they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it, while Aaron and Hur, one on each side, supported his hands; thus his hands remained steady until the sun set. And Joshua overwhelmed the people of Amalek with the sword. (Exod 17:8-13)

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[160] For further treatment of this passage see this dissertation, page 169.

[161] Cf. Deut 25:17-19, 1 Sam 15:2-3.

Moses' upraised hands could have had supernatural significance or it could have simply

been an act of psychological warfare which rallied the Israelite troops.[162]

One of the greatest motivators for troops was the defense of family and home. In

Numbers 1 the Biblical author wrote that troops were arranged by family groups each

under their unique banner. "The Israelites shall encamp troop by troop, each man with

his division and each under his standard" (Num 1:52). This arrangement encouraged

soldiers because they were teamed with their family members and their motivation would

be high because they were defending family in camp and at home.

> The army was a militia force whose men fought with their own clans and with
> comrades they had known from childhood. Led by well-respected tactical
> commanders with reputations for bravery, the Israelite army was fighting for a
> cause it believed was divinely inspired. The proximity of their children and
> families to the battlefield encouraged every soldier to fight well, for defeat risked
> the death or enslavement of their kin. In addition the Israelite commanders made
> every effort to remove those men who possessed characteristics that might
> provoke their collapse or flight in battle from the fighting ranks (Gabriel 2003,
> 123).

In Numbers 10 the author portrayed Moses instructing the priests to blow their

trumpets on various occasions, one of those occasions being when they were engaged in

battle. "When you are at war in your land against an aggressor who attacks you, you

shall sound short blasts on the trumpets, that you may be remembered before the LORD

your God and be delivered from your enemies" (Num 10:9). The reason given for these

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[162] "The Talmud (Rosh HaShanah 29a) cites Exodus 17:12 and explains that
Moses' hands were certainly not the source of the Jews' victory. Scripture is not
attributing any supernatural power to Moses' hands. Rather, Moses pointed his hands
heavenward as a symbolic reminder that the Israelites should look to God for deliverance,
for the Jews would only be victorious as long as they consecrated their hearts to their
Father in heaven" (Drucker 220-221).

short blasts on a trumpet was to garner YHWH's attention to the ensuing conflict, that

they would "be remembered before the Lord"; but these blasts were also a reminder to

the troops that YHWH was aware of their plight and was battling with them.

In Deuteronomy 23 we find that the Israelite troops were commanded to keep

their war camps pure by excluding soldiers who had nocturnal emissions from camp until

they were ritually clean, and taking bowel movements outside of the camp and burying

their excrement.[163]

> Further, there shall be an area for you outside the camp, where you may relieve
> yourself. With your gear you shall have a spike, and when you have squatted you
> shall dig a hole with it and cover up your excrement. Since the LORD your God
> moves about in your camp to protect you and to deliver your enemies to you, let
> your camp be holy; let Him not find anything unseemly among you and turn away
> from you. (Deut 23:13-15)

This emphasis upon purity and cleanliness raised the troops' estimation of

themselves. Soldiers knew that they were being held to a high standard physically and

spiritually, which ensured them of YHWH's blessing in their battles.[164]

Joshua

The most notable pre-monarchy military leader pictured in the Hebrew Bible was

Joshua. The Biblical text portrays him as an outstanding commander of the troops who

understood his troops, YHWH, and the enemy.

> "Among the most striking characteristics of Joshua's army was its high level of
> combat training as reflected in their ability to conduct sophisticated tactical

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[163] "Daube feels that it is not the act, but the disgraceful public appearance of the
unseemly excrement, that is shameful and condemned. It is simply indecent and
something not to be seen" (Huber 20).

[164] Augustine opined, "A soldier must 'be blameless who carries on war on the
authority of God, of whom every one who serves him knows that He can never require
what is wrong'" (Augustine, paragraph 75) .

maneuvers on the battlefield. (…) The range of tactical maneuvers and operational capabilities of Joshua's army is truly impressive, (…) These included the systematic use of tactical reconnaissance, forced marches at night over rugged terrain, ambush, tactical surprise, the concentration of forces at the Schwerpunkt, enticement, decoys, deception, coordination of divided forces, tactical communication, indirect approaches, feints, diversionary movements, lethal pursuit, and the storming of fortified cities. As regards Israelite tactical ability, Malamat says that 'throughout the literature of the ancient Near East . . . The books of Joshua and Judges remain unique in the number and variety of battle schemes gathered." (Gabriel 2003, 124)

Gabriel continues with his praise for Joshua's leadership abilities "Joshua's army can be said to have been an 'irregular force' only in the sense that it was comprised of militia soldiers instead of the professionals characteristic of this Canaanite adversaries. In terms of discipline, training, morale, quality of leadership, and operational capability, however, it was certainly as professional as an army of the day" (Gabriel 2003, 124). Joshua understood that he was an example of YHWH's strength and resolve so he was a highly visible leader.

"Among the important qualities of a warrior in ancient times were physical abilities like stamina, physical dexterity, and strength. Although in his midsixties, Joshua is portrayed as leading his men in uphill night marches and pursuing the enemy into the Aijalon Valley without stopping to rest. Joshua also established himself as a combat leader willing to risk his own life. In every battle Joshua 'leads from the front,' exposing himself to the same risk as his men. (…) But the most important mark of the warrior in ancient times was his willingness and ability to kill. (…) And here Joshua was ruthless. Time and again he ordered the extermination of city populations and personally executed some of the rival commanders he captured. Like Saul and David after him he became a blood-soaked warrior, and like them he was admired for it" (Gabriel 2003, 123).

After the Israelites crossed the Jordan River they are shown to revere Joshua. "On that day the LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel; so that they revered him all his days as they had revered Moses" (Josh 4:14). The people believed that Joshua had a communicative link with YHWH just as Moses had and that YHWH supported Joshua and Israel too. This transference of authority from Moses to Joshua was very important to

the military success of the Israelites. Joshua embodied their cause and urged them to do

what YHWH had called them to do, take the land of Canaan. [165]

In Joshua 3 the author reminds the reader that the Ark of the Covenant was a

rallying point for the Israelite army which gave them a sense of hope and invincibility.

The Israelite leaders were aware of the "psychological value of the presence of the Ark of

the Covenant" (Hobbs 171). It symbolized YHWH's presence with the Israelites and

YHWH's blessing upon their military endeavors. Joshua 3:2-6 expresses the Israelite

respect for the Ark - the army was to follow the Ark (and symbolically YHWH) and yet

they were not to come within 2,000 cubits of the Ark. They were also reminded that they

must be pure. Joshua said, "Purify yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will perform

wonders in your midst" (Josh 3:5).   Joshua is expressing that YHWH would fight for

Israel, and through Israel, if they were appropriately respectful and pure.

In Joshua 5 the author describes the circumcision of the male Israelites on the

other side of the Jordan. This ceremony left the Israelites vulnerable, yet it motivated

them by setting them apart to YHWH's service in a tangible way.

> "Only males of military age were circumcised at Gilgal--as a rite of passage and,
> perhaps a means of testing the courage of new recruits. If so, then when the text
> reads, 'and it was these that Joshua circumcised' it may mean exactly that, namely,
> that Joshua himself officiated at the circumcision of the troops, thereby endowing
> the ceremony with a distinctly military character. (…) The Gilgal circumcision
> represents a covenant with the Divine Warrior, and Joshua may have introduced it
> as a way of separating the warriors from the rest of the people by bestowing a
> special status upon them. (…) Modern physicians estimate that it would take a
> circumcised male at least ten to 14 days to recover from the surgery and be able to

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[165] "The psychological aspects of war, namely, the crisis of the instinct of self-preservation, the idealization of the need for sacrifice as well as the idealization of the leader, all seem to be phenomena that occur on the basis of the fact that individuals form a group on the basis of the identification with a common love object" (Fornari 36). In this case the "love object" was Joshua.

return to his duties as a soldier. At Gilgal, then, the Israelites were defenseless for more than two weeks while the soldiers recovered. To put his army at such risk made little sense unless Joshua reasoned that the psychological benefit to be gained, expressed as increased unit cohesion, status, and self-esteem, was worth it." (Gabriel 2003, 130)

When the Israelites were about to attack Jericho in Joshua 6:17-19 Joshua pronounced a ban which proscribed everything in Jericho to YHWH, with the exception of Rahab and those with her. This was motivated partially by religious concerns and partially by practical concerns. Joshua anticipated that the Israelites would participate in several more battles in the near future, and he needed to assure that the Israelites would not become distracted by loot in the midst of battle. The ban allowed the soldiers to focus solely upon battle.

The author's characterization of the Israelites is that they were convinced that they were fighting for their god, under the capable leadership of their military leader, for a national purpose - they sensed that it was their destiny to take the 'Promised Land'.[166]

> "By preserving a clear view of the objective and applying means unanticipated by the enemy, a bold and imaginative Israelite leadership was successful in translating what we today would call a specific military doctrine into spontaneous victory. An overriding factor was the Israelite soldier's basic motivation – his deep sense of national purpose. It was this blend which engendered the momentum of the Israelite conquest." (Hobbs 201)

In Joshua 8 we find a story reminiscent of Exodus 17 where Moses raised his hands and encouraged the Israelites in battle.[167] This time Joshua is pictured with a

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[166] "The Greek general Xenophon remarked in this regard that 'the strength of an army resides not in its weapons, but in its soul.' Joshua seems to have been an early believer in the idea that the 'soul' of the soldier is the most important element in why he fights" (Gabriel 2003, 130).

[167] "Joshua's extension of the spear during the entire battle is reminiscent of Moses' raising his hand during the battle against Amalek described in Exodus 17:12. (Daas Sofrim)" (Drucker 220).

raised a javelin which spurred the Israelites on to defeat Ai.

> The LORD then said to Joshua, "Hold out the javelin in your hand toward Ai, for I will deliver it into your hands." So Joshua held out the javelin in his hand toward the city. As soon as he held out his hand, the ambush came rushing out of their station. They entered the city and captured it; and they swiftly set fire to the city. . . . Joshua did not draw back the hand with which he held out his javelin until all the inhabitants of Ai had been exterminated. (Josh 8:18-19, 26)

Joshua was the military leader in Exodus 17 when Moses had raised his hands during battle, so Joshua participated in both of these acts of rallying the troops: once as the military leader and once as the commander-in-chief. Joshua understood that visible leadership provided the troops with focus and encouragement.

> "The General explained the plan that was devised during the night. 'Tomorrow I will station myself on the top of the hill, with the rod of God in my hand.' Here we see the ancient dictum that commanders must be seen by their soldiers to be effective. Egyptian pharaohs were always portrayed as leading their troops in battle, as was Alexander. Caesar, it was said, wore a red cloak so his men could easily identify him during battle." (Gabriel 2003, 82)

A battle scene in Joshua 10 shows Joshua rallying the troops and rallying his lieutenants. The Israelite army defeated a coalition of five kings who holed up in a cave.[168]   Joshua ordered, "Open the mouth of the cave, and bring those five kings out of the cave to me." This was done. Those five kings—the king of Jerusalem, the king Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, and the king of Eglon—were brought out to him from the cave. And when the kings were brought out to Joshua, Joshua summoned all the men of Israel and ordered the army officers who had accompanied him, "come forward and place your feet on the necks of these kings." They came forward and placed their feet on their necks. Joshua said to them, "Do not be frightened or dismayed;

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[168] See pages 100, 134, 166 and 172 in this dissertation for further discussion about this passage.

be firm and resolute. For this is what the LORD is going to do to all the enemies with who you are at war." (Josh 10:22-25) This ritual was intended to instill courage in these Israelite leaders which would then filter down to the troops.

> The 'foot of arrogance' is a gesture designed to publicly humiliate by pointing out the weakened, helpless, inferior position of defeated enemies, especially kings. When it is done to a king, there is an added degree of incongruity involved. In the Joshua text an officer, a person of lower status than a king, places his foot, the lowest part of the body, on the head/neck, the highest part of the body, of a king, a person of the highest status. This degrading gesture has the effect of strengthening the self-confidence, courage, and feelings of superiority of the Israelite warriors. They gain confidence and status through the lowering of the status and humiliation of the kings--i.e., as the kings are 'put down,' the warriors of Israel are 'raised up.' (Huber 78-79)

19th century rabbinic exegete Malbim opined "This was a symbolic gesture signifying that all the remaining Canaanites would be trampled by the Israelites [Joshua ordered that this act take place in the presence of all the men of Israel to inspire them in their conquest of the Canaanites.]" (Drucker 256).

The Biblical author wrote that Joshua ordered that the kings be impaled until evening which further rallied the Israelites and discouraged the Canaanites.[169] Then he ordered them to be thrown back into the cave where they had hidden and ordered large stones to be rolled over the entrance.

Judges

In the book of Joshua, Joshua is portrayed as the object of Israel's admiration and affection. In the book of Judges no consistent leader led the Israelites' militia. Instead

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[169] "Ralbag maintains that this act was calculated to instill fear in the remaining Canaanites in order to deter them from waging war against Israel. To increase the effect of the deterrent, Joshua ordered that their bodies be hanged on the gallows and cast into the cave. The placing of the large stones in front of the opening was designed to serve as a remembrance for the Israelites of this miraculous battle" (Drucker 256-257).

there was a parade of leaders who typically raised up a temporary fighting force to respond to a specific military threat.

> "We have seen that the period of the Judges was not characterised by a central political motivation for military strategy. The military strategy, which in turn reflects the political set-up is more 'ad-hoc', a defensive reaction to invasion, an instinctive protection of the social limits which involved some, though never all of the tribes. The blend of the 'deep sense of national purpose' and the strategic military doctrine, so much a hallmark of the story of Joshua, disappears when we read the stories in the book of Judges." (Hobbs 202)

In Judges 3 after Ehud killed Eglon the Moabite king Ehud is shown rallying the Israelites to battle using a שופר, ram's horn, (Judg 3:27-30). The Israelites must have known about his assassination plot, and the sounding of the ram's horn was the signal that he was successful. This story contrasts the demotivating shameful death of Eglon with the motivating success of Ehud.[170]

Then in Judges 7 we find that Gideon was motivating his troops by choosing only 300 men out of the thousands who volunteered for militia duty.[171]

> Therefore, announce to the men, 'Let anybody who is timid and fearful turn back, as a bird flies from Mount Gilead.'" Thereupon, 22,000 of the troops turned back and 10,000 remained. "There are still too many troops," the LORD said to Gideon. "Take them down to the water and I will sift them for you there. Anyone of whom I tell you, 'This one is to go with you,' that one shall go with you; and anyone of whom I tell you, 'This one is not to go with you,' that one shall not go." So he took the troops down to the water. Then the LORD said to Gideon, "Set apart all those who lap up the water with their tongues like dogs from all those who get down on their knees to drink." Now those who "lapped" the water into their mouths by hand numbered three hundred; all the rest of the troops got down on their knees to drink. (Judg 7:3-6)

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[170] See further treatment of this passage on pages 101-102 in this dissertation.

[171] See further treatment of this passage on pages 136-137 and 173 in this dissertation.

Many have questioned why the author says that YHWH and Gideon chose the 300 men who lapped the water. Gabriel noted a common explanation:

> The British General, Lord Wavell, noted in his book that a modern commander would find the selection process a sound one. "The majority of his men, parched by the heat on the bare rocky hills, flung themselves down full length by the stream when their opportunity came and drank heedlessly and carelessly. Only the seasoned warrior with experience of snipers and ambushes, kept his weapon in one hand and his eyes toward his foes, while he dipped the other hand in the water and lapped from it, ready for action at the slightest danger." (Gabriel 2003, 172)

Rabbinic authors also shared their perspective on this selection process.

> Set him (i.e. he who kneels) separately away from your group because they will not go with you since they are thus accustomed to kneel before idols [Rashi]. A variant explanation is to be found in Yalkut Shimoni; they were rejected because they kneeled before their own reflection which was visible on the water. Although kneeling when drinking was not prohibited, those who refrained from it did so because they were careful not to even come close to anything similar to idol worshipping. Therefore, they were chosen [Daas Sofrim]. Ralbag maintains that those who kneeled showed that they were lazy and unfit for war, whereas those who drew the water with their hands exhibited strength and endurance. (Fishelis 61).

Klein shared her perspective on why the 'lappers' were chosen over the other soldiers. She questioned whether the soldiers were chosen because of their competence, or for some other reason.

> The basis of selection has been variously conjectured since the time of Josephus, and the verse components have been reconstructed to support myriad theories, all of which assume a single test of elimination. However, careful reading of the text suggests a two-step process of selection. A further confusion which appears repeatedly in the literature—whether those who were selected were the more astute about their situation and aware of their danger (courageous men of common sense) or took water in their hands out of fear—seems irrelevant. Either way, it is a test of *attitude*, and Yahweh chose those with the attitudes of men rather than those with the attitudes of *animals*. (Klein 56-57)

> Regardless of why the soldiers were chosen, the story portrays a great

disadvantage against the Midianite army. The author depicts that the Israelites could only be victorious by obeying YHWH and Gideon implicitly. The selection process gave the

remaining soldiers a sense of destiny as part of the few chosen to battle the Midianites.

In Judges 19 we find the author's portrayal of one of the starkest instances of

rallying the troops with one's actions. A man from the town of Gibeah noticed that a

traveler was preparing to spend the night in Gibeah outdoors. The man told the traveler

to spend the night in his home because of safety concerns. During the night the men of

the city came to take the traveler so that they could have sex with him. The man from

Gibeah sent out his concubine instead. The next morning they found her dead. "When

he came home, he picked up a knife, and took hold of his concubine and cut her up limb

by limb into twelve parts. He sent them throughout the territory of Israel. And everyone

who saw it cried out, 'Never has such a thing happened or been seen from the day the

Israelites came out of the land of Egypt to this day! Put your mind to this; take counsel

and decide'" (Judg 19:29-30).

> Malbim explains that the man also sent along a description of what occurred, as
> well as the pieces. The man wished to illustrate that just as a human being cannot
> exist if he is dismembered, likewise the nation of Israel cannot survive without
> unity. The cruel conduct of Benjamin could only lead to disunity, therefore it had
> to be corrected. Furthermore, just as when a human limb is infected, it must be
> removed to preserve the health of the whole body, likewise, when part of a nation
> deteriorates, steps must be taken to rectify the situation and restore the nation.
> (Fishelis, 158-159)

This scene is reminiscent of the story of Saul dismembering his oxen and sending

the pieces out to rally the Israelites in 1 Samuel 11.[172] In Saul's case the people of

Jabesh-Gilead were threatened by Nahash the Ammonite and when Saul sent the pieces

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[172] Saul's rallying the Israelites is treated further in this dissertation on page 174.

of his oxen around to the other tribes a terror from the LORD fell on them and they

responded.[173]

> "The fundamental assumption of this bizarre method of summoning help was that all Israelites were obliged by mutual pledge to come to the aid of any Israelite in time of military need (…) Thus the symbolic dismembering of the oxen may be regarded as a kind of conditional curse: may the oxen of anyone who does not respond to the summons as agreed suffer the same fate! Ancient parallels, moreover, suggest that the threat might have been more direct, wishing that the people themselves, not their oxen, would be slain" (McCarter 1980).

Saul

These next instances of rallying troops relate to the figure of King Saul. In 1

Samuel 13 Saul's son Jonathan is depicted attacking a Philistine outpost and the

Philistines arrayed themselves for battle in response. Saul commanded that a horn be

sounded through Israel to call upon the Israelite militia to assemble themselves for war (1

Sam 13:3). In the story Samuel told Saul that he would be there to offer sacrifices to

YHWH in seven days and then the battle could commence. In a few days the Israelites

assembled themselves and, after the initial rush of excitement, a dread of the Philistines

settled into many of their hearts (1 Sam 13:6-7). Saul saw that his troops were scattering

out of fear and waning interest. He waited seven days for Samuel and then offered the

sacrifices to YHWH himself. The Biblical author is showing that Saul was trying to rally

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[173] There are some stark differences between Saul's act and the act of the man from Gibeah. The man from Gibeah was calling the Israelites to respond against their own flesh and blood, out of outrage, shame and disgust. The pieces being sent to the tribes were those of a sexually abused human being which is more disturbing than a dismembered ox. While the oxen pieces were rallying the people to respond to a common enemy, the concubine's pieces were an indictment not only of Gibeah and Benjamin, but also of Israel as a whole. The man was in essence saying, "Look how base we have become." Also, the unnamed man was not a military leader calling Israel to his side. He was simply exposing injustice and calling upon them as humans to avenge and rectify what happened to a fellow human.

the troops again by showing that YHWH would be with them in the impending battle. Samuel came shortly thereafter and chastised Saul for taking matters into his own hands.

Saul's response reveals that his motivation to perfom the religious ritual was to win his troops back. "I saw the people leaving me and scattering; you had not come at the appointed time, and the Philistines had gathered at Michmas. I thought the Philistines would march down against me at Gilgal before I had entreated the LORD, so I forced myself to present the burnt offering" (1 Sam 13:11-12). Although Saul did err in the spiritual understanding of this situation he acted very normally from a military standpoint. The narrator depicts that his troops needed encouragement and clarity and he tried to provide these by making the burnt sacrifice.

1 Samuel 14 pictures Jonathan attacking another Philistine outpost, which spread terror through the Philistine camp and caused the Philistines to attack each other,[174] the Israelites began to pursue the Philistines as they fled. The author wrote that Saul announced that all the soldiers were to fast until nightfall as they pursued and killed the Philistines. "The men of Israel were distressed that day. For Saul had laid an oath upon the troops: 'Cursed be the man who eats any food before night falls and I take revenge on my enemies'" (1 Sam 14:24). Perhaps Saul was trying to compensate for his earlier religious error, maybe he was trying to keep the men focused upon the pursuit and not

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[174] See further treatment of this passage on pages 72, 91 and 174 of this dissertation.

food and other kinds of booty,[175] but he erred in depriving the men of a basic necessity as they pursued the Philistines. He was trying to motivate the troops by using a religious convention without the religious significance. The author makes no mention of seeking YHWH's guidance or assistance concerning this fast; this fast was purely motivated by getting revenge upon his enemies (1 Sam 14:24). Saul failed again at motivating his men properly and when the troops came upon beehives which could have provided them with sustenance this failing became all the more acute.[176]

David

The next instances of rallying the troops are related to David. In 1 Samuel 17 the Biblical author depicts David killing Goliath which inspired the Israelites to attack the Philistines. "When the Philistines saw that their warrior was dead, they ran. The men of Israel and Judah rose up with a war cry and they pursued the Philistines all the way to Gai and up to the gates of Ekron; the Philistines fell mortally wounded along the road to Shaarim up to Gath and Ekron. Then the Israelites returned from chasing the Philistines and looted their camp" (1 Sam 17:51-53).

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[175] "Pursuits are, for obvious reasons, almost always problematic. Either the troops become exhausted or they lose their discipline, as happened to Thutmose III's army at Megiddo when it stopped chasing the enemy and plundered its camp. Since ancient armies were commonly paid with captured booty, the chances that an army might choose booty over chasing the enemy were always high, particularly so for mercenary troops, although the habit was not unknown among Israelite militia levies" (Gabriel 2003, 211).

[176] "Here we see the familiar problem of commanders of how to maintain the momentum of the attack once the enemy has quit the field and fled. (…) What was unique about the Israelite conduct of war, there being no chariots in the Israelite inventory, was the almost routine application of an effective pursuit on foot relying upon the discipline and endurance of the Israelite infantryman for success. (…) Saul's order prohibiting his exhausted troops from eating suggests an awareness of the problems associated with conducting a successful pursuit" (Gabriel 2003, 211).

When David became king his general was Joab, who is portrayed as a rough character who killed many people: Uriah, Amasa and Absalom to name a few. He was known for making shrewd decisions that affected the course of David's life, and the nation of Israel. In 2 Samuel 12 we find that Joab has once again understood what would be best when he refused to take the city of Rabbah for himself. "Joab attacked Rabbah of Ammon and captured the royal city. Joab sent messengers to David and said, 'I have attacked Rabbah and I have already captured the water city. Now muster the rest of the troops and besiege the city and capture it; otherwise I will capture the city myself, and my name will be connected with it'" (2 Sam 12:26-28). David came and captured the city and the king of Rabbah's crown was placed on David's head. The narrator presents that Joab knew it was preferable for David to be credited with the victory; for David's sake and for the sake of the troops, who were honored to fight for David.

In 2 Samuel 21 we again see the value of the king as a rallying point for the troops. David and his troops are depicted battling the Philistines "David grew weary and Ishbi-benob tried to kill David—he was a descendant of Raphah; his bronze spear weighed three hundred shekels and he wore new armor.—But Abishai son of Zeruiah came to his aid; he attacked the Philistine and killed him. It was then that David's men declared to him on oath, 'You shall not go with us into battle any more, lest you extinguish the lamp of Israel!'" (2 Sam 21:15-17). David is portrayed as a strong rallying point for his troops as many kings have been. They received energy and focus by just thinking of him.

4. Conclusion

The most important aspect of psychological warfare dealt with the national troops rather than enemy troops. The national troops needed to be bonded together, motivated and focused upon the tasks that were before them.   This motivation was particularly important since the troops were mostly militia until the divided monarchy and the men were concerned about the safety and survival of their families. "The War Chapter", Deuteronomy 20, provides a glimpse of the psychological and spiritual process Israelite commanders employed to develop a motivated and focused army. The troops were affected by rituals which assured them that they were fighting for and with YHWH.

As the focal point of their troops' allegiance military leaders needed to be motivated and focused so they could effectively encourage their troops. Joshua is an outstanding example of an Israelite military leader who was both himself encouraged (by Moses, YHWH and the Israelites) and encouraged his troops. As we have seen, Joshua is portrayed leading the Israelites with both his words and his actions.

Next we will explore the role that YHWH played in Israel's psychological warfare tactics. The Biblical authors and redactors portray YHWH playing a part in nearly every Israelite battle either by offering guidance, inspiring fear in the enemy and hope in the national troops, or by actually playing a physical role in the battle.[177]

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[177] Hannah's prayer in 1 Samuel 2 depicts YHWH as a warrior God. "The foes of the LORD shall be shattered; He will thunder against them in the heavens. The LORD will judge the ends of the earth. He will give power to His king, and triumph to His anointed one" (1 Sam 2:10).

VI.

DIVINE INTERVENTION IN THE HEBREW BIBLE

1. Introduction

The Biblical authors present that YHWH did not come and join in the battles that

Israel chose to fight. YHWH inspired battles, fought battles and won battles.[178] The

Hebrew Bible portrays a strong relationship between YHWH and Israel when they were

battling a common enemy. Julius Wellhausen opined:

> It was most especially in the graver moments of its history that Israel awoke to
> full consciousness of itself and of Jehovah. Now, at that time and for centuries
> afterwards, the highwater marks of history were indicated by the wars it recorded.
> The name "Israel" means "El does battle," and Jehovah was the warrior El, after
> whom the nation styled itself. The camp was, so to speak, at once the cradle in
> which the nation was nursed and the smithy in which it was welded into unity; it
> was also the primitive sanctuary. There Israel was, and there was Jehovah."
> (Wellhausen 434)

Ollenburger encapsulated Wellhausen's statement thusly: "For Wellhausen, then,

war was not just a feature of Israel's experience, or even of its religion. Ancient Israel as

the people of God was a military camp, and its God was a warrior. War was at the heart

of Israel's religion and thus of its identity" (Ollenburger 3).

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[178] "The function of the war theme can be called 'pastoral'. Just like pastoral care
tends to have component of 'comfort' and one of 'challenge', the writer comforts his
audience with the conviction that YHWH directs history, and at the same time, he
challenges them to become serious about Gods [sic] will in the future. Lost wars also
reveal YHWH's will. Nowhere in these texts did we encounter the idea that war is
beautiful. A war had sometimes been declared contrary to Gods [sic] will (1 Kings 12);
sometimes the method of warfare was immoral (2 Kings 3); sometimes a war was a
punishment (1 Kings 22); sometimes it was a test for the king (1 Kings 20); and
sometimes it was unambiguous disaster to the populations (2 Kings 6-7 and 2 Kings 18-
19)" (Deijl 683).

YHWH was not only observing Israel's wars he was an active participant in many of them. YHWH allowed Israel to perform some part in most of the battles, but in actuality he was fighting either physically or psychologically in nearly every instance.[179]

As has been indicated earlier in the dissertation, one of the greatest motivators for the Israelite troops was the idea that YHWH was fighting for them and they were fighting for YHWH.[180] This gave the Israelites the certainty that they were never in a battle alone and they were fighting a holy war which was under YHWH's authority and strength.

Holy War

The idea of holy war implies that YHWH is holy, Israel is holy and the troops are holy.[181] It also implies that battles can be reduced to good vs. evil, holy vs. unholy, YHWH and Israel vs. false gods and all other nations. "Wars were given religious justification. The enemy had sinned against the opponent's gods, and victory was described as the triumph of one god over another or as a triumph of justice" (Bienkowski 316).

In Numbers 21:14 the author mentions an extra-Biblical text named *The Book of the Wars of the Lord*, this title reveals the ancient Israelite understanding of warfare.

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[179] "These wars are Yahweh's wars (מלחמות יהוה; 1 Sa. 18:17; 25:28; cf. Num. 21:14). The enemies are Yahweh's enemies (איבי יהוה; Judg. 5:31; 1 Sam. 30:26). The one who acts is Yahweh alone" (Rad 44).

[180] See pages 123-125 of this dissertation for this discussion.

[181] "Henceforth the army stood under severe sacral regulations. The men were 'consecrated' (קדש; Josh. 3:5). They submitted to sexual renunciation (1 Sam. 21:5; 2 Sam. 11:11-12). Certainly the making of vows also played a role (Num. 21:2; Judg. 11:36; 1 Sam. 14:24). The entire camp community had to be ritually pure (Deut. 23:9-14) because Yahweh was present in the camp (יהוה אלהיך מתהלך בקרב מחנך). Also, the weapons were consecrated (1 Sam. 21:5; 2 Sam. 1:21)" (Rad 42).

YHWH was actually YHWH fighting for the Israelites and the Israelites' main goal was

to be in sync with what YHWH told them to do.[182] Typically the Biblical authors portray

Israel as undermanned, underarmored and in need of YHWH's assistance. Typically they

were fighting with limited weaponry, no horses, no chariots and fewer soldiers than the

opposing force.[183] YHWH also tended to use military commanders who did not appear to

be suited for the role at first glance.

> The absence of weapons in Israel can make sense only in the context of holy war
> where it was believed that weapons and numbers did not really matter because
> Yahewh came and fought for Israel. This does not mean that in actuality there was
> no fighting with weapons. Rather, it was in the ideology, expressed so vividly in
> the poem, that weapons and human might were regarded as being of minimal
> value. (Miller 1973, 92)

In the Hebrew Bible YHWH is pictured calling men and women who did not feel

adequate to the task before them, who typically had a glaring fault or weakness in their

past or in their psychological make-up. YHWH sought to demonstrate that Israel was his

people and he was their God, their protector and king.[184] Priests played a major role in

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[182] "The wars of Assur were just wars, but the war of Yahweh was a genuine holy
war. The wars of the ancient Hebrews had been expressly commanded by Yahweh as
part of his cosmic plan, to clear heathen nations out of the way of Israel, though he
allowed some to remain in order to test the Israelites. Yahweh fought in these wars as an
active participant and prosecuted them with genocidal fury" (Dawson 42).

[183] "The power of God and the helplessness of human fighters is also conveyed
by a lengthy biblical tradition of wars presented as miracle accounts" (Niditch 144).
"The authors of 1 and 2 Chronicles are especially fond of having humbled, weak
and meek Israelites call upon God for help and rescue" (Niditch 143).

[184] "Weber's remarks about Israelite warfare depend on the use of 'holy war' as
an abstract concept, a 'type.' Weber seems to have thought there were only three pure
instances of holy war—the war of Deborah and Barak in Judg. 5, the war of the tribes
against Benjamin in Judg. 20, and Saul's war against the Ammonites in 1 Sam. 11. The
deciding factor in each was the covenant mutually obligating the members of the
confederacy to defend it, and in each case—on Weber's interpretation—there was failure
of some part of the confederacy to honor this obligation" (Ollenburger 8).

the preparation of battle plans because they sought out YHWH's favor and guidance in battle strategies.

Gerhard von Rad wrote about the concept of holy war and came to some interesting conclusions. He noted Johannes Pedersen's portrayal of YHWH's work in warfare.

> God is the source of the power; from God every individual warrior receives power. The task of the army leader is always the same: to increase this power, and this takes place only by connection to the source of power. Yahweh works in unity with the warriors, because he works with their souls. Holiness has its root in the soul; it is a universal power that fills all the men. Weapons are certainly important, but of much greater significance is the fact that those who used them possessed the proper power in the soul: "It is the powers, the invisible powers at work behind, which decide the issue." (Rad 70-71)

He also stated that holy wars were mostly limited to the pre-monarchial period when the majority of the soldiers were militia.[185] His understanding is that when the leadership of Israel transformed from the charismatic temporary leaders[186] to the political structure of monarchy, wars gained a different significance, advancing political aspirations, rather than simply doing what YHWH told them to do.[187]

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[185] "In the holy wars Israel did not arise to protect faith in Yahweh, but Yahweh came on the scene to defend Israel, for the members of the amphictyony were sheltered under his protection; Israel was Yahweh's possession" (Rad 72-73).

[186] "Any Israelite could be recognized as leader of the militia if only his rising up was validated by the Spirit of Yahweh. In principle this charisma would validate itself; but history shows that just as often it was the actual deed that proved the charisma, which then drew the other tribes along to a more belated participation" (Rad 67).

[187] "We saw that the old holy wars were waged simply for the defensive protection of the physical existence of the Yahweh amphictyony and that they were not at all directed against the worship or beliefs of the enemies" (Rad 118).

In the monarchial period the army was no longer simply militia who were called into battle by tribal leaders to fight alongside fellow tribe or clan members, the soldiers were now a standing army which was a mixture of mercenaries from surrounding nations, professional Israelite soldiers, and militia when needed. This mixing of different peoples and different faiths necessarily signaled the end of holy war. "With the rise of kingship the end of the sacral institution of holy wars *in principle* was sealed, for the decisive shift which accompanied the rise of kingship in Israel was so deep and so momentous that it had to result in external and internal rearrangements in every realm of the people's life" (Rad 74).

According to the author of Judges 3, YHWH tested Israel by leaving other nations in Canaan; they were there to prepare future generations for war. "These are the nations that the LORD left so that He might test by them all the Israelites who had not known any of the wars of Canaan, so that succeeding generations of Israelites might be made to experience war—but only those who had not known the former wars" (Judg 3:1-2). This statement could be explaining Israel's failure to fully capture Canaan, and it could be expressing that war would be a normal occurrence in Israel and YHWH was preparing them for this reality. Israel expected warfare; their land was on the major trade routes between Egypt, Hatti and Mesopotamia. The Biblical authors portray tenuous relationships between Israel and most nations which bordered them, which often developed during Israel's conquest of Canaan.

The Biblical authors depicts that the Israelites believed that war was inevitable, YHWH prepared them for battle and that YHWH promised to battle with them. The

means by which YHWH battled were either by rallying the Israelite commanders and troops, or fighting for them physically.

2. YHWH rallies the Israelite commanders and troops

The Biblical authors claim YHWH assured Israelite kings and military leaders that he would be with them, and it was this assurance that caused them to have confidence as they spoke to their troops about facing seemingly insurmountable odds in battle.[188] "At the center of Israel's warfare was the unyielding conviction that victory was the result of a fusion of divine and human activity. (…) Yahweh was general of both the earthly and heavenly hosts" (Miller 1973, 156). YHWH expressed his preeminence over other gods through battle in an earthly realm. "Unlike the basic tenet of most Near Eastern mythology, his kingship was established not primarily by the mythological battle of the gods, but by the historical victories of Yahweh and his earthly and heavenly armies over the enemies of Israel" (Miller 1973, 83).

Israel's belief that YHWH battled for them gave them confidence as they conquered Canaan[189] and defended their 'Promised Land'. "However, there was one fundamental difference which vouchsafed the final success off the Israelite endeavours. The ancient Israelites were imbued with the belief that Canaan was theirs by function of their God, the one and only true deity (Herzog 62).

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[188] "This activity of Yahweh is what determines—in a psychological respect, first of all—the behavior of Israel as well as that of the enemies. *Israel must not fear but must believe*" (Rad 45).

[189] "In the ancient Near East, one encounters within conquest accounts narration of divine intervention" (Younger 1990, 219).

Moses

In Exodus 23 YHWH is portrayed speaking to Israel in preparation for its conquest of Canaan. He explains how the conquest will happen and how he will cause it to happen.

> I will send forth My terror before you, and I will throw into panic all the people among whom you come, and I will make all your enemies turn tail before you. I will send a plague ahead of you, and it shall drive out before you the Hivites, the Canaanites, and the Hittites. I will not drive them out before you in a single year, lest the land become desolate and the wild beasts multiply to your hurt. I will drive them out before you little by little, until you have increased and possess the land. I will set your borders from the Sea of Reeds to the Sea of Philistia, and from the wilderness to the Euphrates; for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hands, and you will drive them out before you. You shall make no covenant with them and their gods. They shall not remain in your land, lest they cause you to sin against Me; for you will serve their gods—and it will prove a snare to you. (Exod 23:27-33)

YHWH's explanation is continued in Exodus 34, where he describes the need for the extrication of the indigenous Canaanite people and their worship practices.[190]

> Mark well what I command you this day. I will drive out before you the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Hittites,the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. Beware of making a covenant with the inhabitantsof the land against which you are advancing, lest they be a snare in your midst. No, you must tear down their altars, smash their pillars, and cut down their sacred posts; for you must not worship any other god, because the LORD, whose name is Impassioned, is an impassioned God. (Exod 34:11-14)

In Numbers 14 the Biblical author displays the struggle that YHWH had convincing the Israelites to enter the Promised Land. Initially, YHWH told them that he would be with Israel and therefore the Israelites must not fear or stand in awe of the Canaanites because YHWH stands with Israel.

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[190] The reason given for their removal is their wickedness. Cf. Leviticus 18:24-30; Deut. 9:4b; 18:12, 18:14.

> Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembled congregation of the Israelites. And Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, of those who had scouted the land, rent their clothes and exhorted the whole Israelite community: "The land that we traversed and scouted is an exceedingly good land. If the LORD is pleased with us, He will bring us into that land, a land that flows with milk and honey, and give it to us; only you must not rebel against the LORD. Have no fear then of the people of the country, for they are our prey: their protection has departed from them, but the LORD is with us. Have no fear of them!" As the whole community threatened to pelt them with stones, the Presence of the LORD appeared in the Tent of Meeting to all the Israelites. (Num 14:5-10)

Then when the Israelites rejected YHWH's call to enter the land He wanted to kill them and make a new nation out of Moses' lineage. "And the LORD said to Moses, 'How long will this people spurn Me, and how long will they have no faith in Me despite all the signs that I have performed in their midst? I will strike them with pestilence and disown them, and I will make of you a nation far more numerous than they!'" (Num 14:11-12). Moses pleaded for YHWH not to destroy Israel and He relented. The Israelites then tried to enter Canaan without YHWH's blessing and were defeated. This defeat was the prelude to the years of wandering in the wilderness as that unbelieving generation slowly died off.

In Numbers 21 the author pictures the new generation of Israelites being accosted by King Og of Bashan while traveling toward Canaan. YHWH told them not to fear him for they would defeat him as they had defeated Sihon King of Ammon.

> They marched on and went up the road to Bashan, and King Og of Bashan, with all his people, came out to Edrei to engage them in battle. But the LORD said to Moses, "Do not fear him, for I give him and all his people and his land into your hand. You shall do to him as you did to Sihon king of the Amorites who dwelt in Heshbon." They defeated him and his sons and all his people, until no remnant was left him; and they took possession of his country. (Num 21:33-35)

Then in Deuteronomy 3 the author portrays YHWH's simple statement to Israel: "Do not fear them, for it is the LORD your God who will battle for you" (Deut 3:22).

Later, in Deuteronomy 31 YHWH is depicted speaking through Moses to Joshua three times telling him to 'be strong and resolute'.[191] Then Joshua is told again in Joshua 1 to be strong and resolute.[192]

In Deuteronomy 32 Moses spoke for YHWH as he described YHWH the warrior.

> See, then, that I, I am He;
> There is no god beside Me.
> I deal death and give life;
> I wounded and I will heal:
> None can deliver from My hand.
> Lo, I raise My hand to heaven
> And say: As I live forever,
> When I whet My flashing blade
> And My hand lays hold on judgment,
> Vengeance will I wreak on My foes,
> Will I deal to those who reject Me.
> I will make My arrows drunk with blood—
> As My sword devours flesh—
> Blood of the slain and the captive
> From the long-haired enemy chiefs.   (Deut 32:39-42)

Joshua

The author of the book of Joshua portrays YHWH as the driving force behind the conquering of Canaan. In Joshua 2 we find the spies that Joshua sent into Canaan brought back an encouraging report about the feasibility of attacking Jericho and the rest of Canaan.

> Then the two men came down again from the hills and crossed over. They came to Joshua son of Nun and reported to him all that had happened to them. They said to Joshua, "The LORD has delivered the whole land into our power, in fact, all the inhabitants of the land are quaking before us." (Josh 2:23-24)

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[191] See Deut 31:3-6, 7 and 23 to see the times that Moses told Joshua to 'be strong and resolute.

[192] See Joshua 1:5-11 where YHWH tells Joshua to "be strong and resolute" again.

In Joshua 3 Joshua told the Israelites to prepare themselves for YHWH was about to lead them across the Jordan River to claim the land of Canaan. The Ark of the Covenant was sent ahead of them which symbolized YHWH's presence with them.

> And Joshua said to the people, "Purify yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will perform wonders in your midst." Then Joshua ordered the priests, "Take up the Ark of the Covenant and advance to the head of the people." And they took up the Ark of the Covenant and marched at the head of the people. The LORD said to Joshua, "This day, for the first time, I will exalt you in the sight of all Israel, so that they shall know that I will be with you as I was with Moses. For your part, command the priests who carry the Ark of the Covenant as follows: When you reach the edge of the waters of the Jordan, make a halt in the Jordan." And Joshua said to the Israelites, "Come closer and listen to the words of the LORD your God. By this," Joshua continued, "you shall know that a living God is among you, and that He will dispossess for you the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites, and Jebusites: the Ark of the Covenant of the Sovereign of all the earth is advancing before you into the Jordan. (Josh 3:5-11)

In Joshua 6 the author wrote that YHWH promised Israel would defeat Jericho: "The LORD said to Joshua, 'See, I will deliver Jericho and her king [and her] warriors into your hands'" (Josh 6:2).

In Joshua 8 the Biblical author depicts YHWH telling Joshua that Israel would defeat Ai, who previously defeated them: Joshua 7:1 relates that after Israel defeated Jericho Achan took some booty which was חרם, devoted to God and to be utterly destroyed (Brown 356). Because of Achan's sin God did not fight for the Israelites they were repulse by the people of Ai. After Israel stoned Achan, and stoned and burned his family and all of his possessions, (Josh 7:25-26), God said to Joshua "Do not be frightened or dismayed. Take all the fighting troops with you, go and march against Ai. See, I will deliver the king of Ai, his people, his city, and his land into your hands. You

shall treat Ai and her king as you treated Jericho and her king; however, you may take the spoil and the cattle as booty for yourselves. Now set an ambush against the city behind it" (Josh 8:1-2).

In Joshua 10 YHWH told Joshua not to fear the five Amorite kings who were allied against him. The LORD said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid of them, for I will deliver them into your hands; not one of them shall withstand you" (Josh 10:8).[193]

Judges

In Judges 6 the Biblical author wrote that YHWH's messenger told Gideon that he was a mighty warrior when the evidence was to the contrary. "The LORD is with you, valiant warrior!" (Judg 6:12). Gideon struggled to believe that YHWH would use him to deliver Israel, he questioned the messenger about this message from YHWH. Finally, the discussion was ended when YHWH said: "I will be with you, and you shall defeat Midian to a man" (Judg 6:16).

In Judges 20 as the nation of Israel was preparing to excise the tribe of Benjamin because of their depravity. YHWH is portrayed telling them to go up against Benjamin twice in verses 18 and 23 and twice they were defeated. YHWH did not promise success he just told them to enjoin Benjamin in battle. Israel fasted and wept and asked YHWH again whether they should attack Benjamin and this time YHWH answered: "Go up, for tomorrow I will deliver them into your hands" (Judg 20:28). This time Israel was successful in punishing Benjamin for the acts of the men of Gibeah.

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[193] See pages 100, 134, 146-147 and 172 in this dissertation for further discussion about this passage.

Monarchial

The author of 1 Samuel 15 portrayed YHWH taking revenge on the Amalekites

through Saul and Samuel: "Thus said the LORD of Hosts: I am exacting the penalty for

what Amalek did to Israel, for the assault he made upon them on the road, on their way

up from Egypt. Now go, attack Amalek, and proscribe all that belongs to him. Spare no

one, but kill alike men and women, infants and sucklings, oxen and sheep, camels and

asses!" (1 Samuel 15:2-3).

In 2 Samuel 5 YHWH is pictured responding to David's question about attacking

the Philistines directly:

> David inquired of the LORD, "Shall I go up against the Philistines? Will You
> deliver them into my hands?" And the LORD answered David, "Go up, and I will
> deliver the Philistines into your hands." Thereupon David marched to Baal-
> perazim, and David defeated them there. And he said, "The LORD has broken
> through my enemies before me as waters break through [a dam]." (2 Sam 5:19-
> 20)

In 2 Chronicles 20 we find that Jehoshaphat and Judah are in danger of attack

from a coalition of forces headed by the Moabites and Ammonites. Jehoshaphat is

presented praying to YHWH: "'O our God, surely You will punish them, for we are

powerless before this great multitude that has come against us, and do not know what to

do, but our eyes are on You.' All Judah stood before the LORD with their little ones,

their womenfolk, and their children" (2 Chr 20:12-13). The scene is one of weakness and

subservience. YHWH responded through a prophet:

> Then in the midst of the congregation the spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel
> son of Zechariah son of Benaiah son of Jeiel son of Mattaniah the Levite, of the
> sons of Asaph, and he said, "Give heed, all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem
> and King Jehoshaphat; thus said the LORD to you, 'Do not fear or be dismayed
> by this great multitude, for the battle is God's, not yours. March down against
> them tomorrow as they come up by the Ascent of Ziz; you will find them at the
> end of the wadi in the direction of the wilderness of Jeruel. It is not for you to

fight this battle; stand by, wait, and witness your deliverance by the LORD, O Judah and Jerusalem; do not fear or be dismayed; go forth to meet them tomorrow and the LORD will be with you.'" (2 Chr 20:14-17)

In 2 Chronicles 25 Amaziah king of Judah was preparing to attack Edom and the Biblical author wrote that he hired mercenaries from Israel to aid his army in the battle. A prophet told him that YHWH would not bless a battle that included these mercenary troops.

Then a man of God came to him and said, "O king! Do not let the army of Israel go with you, for the LORD is not with Israel—all these Ephraimites. But go by yourself and do it; take courage for battle, [else] God will make you fall before the enemy. For in God there is power to help one or make one fall!" Amaziah said to the man of God, "And what am I to do about the 100 talents I gave for the Israelite force?" The man of God replied, "The LORD has the means to give you much more than that." So Amaziah detached the force that came to him from Ephraim, [ordering them] to go back to their place. They were greatly enraged against Judah and returned to their place in a rage. (2 Chr 25:7-10)

2 Kings 19 pictured the Israelites being threatened by Sennacherib and the Assyrian army. Hezekiah was very frightened and Isaiah spoke YHWH's calming words to his envoys, promising that the Israelites would not battle the Assyrians at all.

"Isaiah said to them, 'Tell your master as follows: Thus said the LORD: Do not be frightened by the words of blasphemy against Me that you have heard from the minions of the king of Assyria. I will delude him; he will hear a rumor and return to his land, and I will make him fall by the sword in his own land'" (2 Kgs 19:6-7).

Then in 2 Kings 19:20-34 Isaiah is portrayed speaking to Hezekiah for YHWH again:

"Assuredly, thus said the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not enter this city: He shall not shoot an arrow at it, Or advance upon it with a shield, Or pile up a siege mound against it. He shall go back By the way he came; He shall not enter this city —declares the LORD. I will protect and save this city for My sake, And for the sake of My servant David." (2 Kgs 19:32-34)

Through Isaiah 7 the Biblical author shares YHWH's words of encouragement to Ahaz king of Judah when he heard that Rezin of Aram and Pekah of Israel had formed an alliance against him.

> Now, when it was reported to the House of David that Aram had allied itself with Ephraim, their hearts and the hearts of their people trembled as trees of the forest sway before a wind. But the LORD said to Isaiah, "Go out with your son Shear-jashuba to meet Ahaz at the end of the conduit of the Upper Pool, by the road of the Fuller's Field. And say to him: Be firm and be calm. Do not be afraid and do not lose heart on account of those two smoking stubs of firebrands, on account of the raging of Rezin and his Arameans and the son of Remaliah. (Isa 7:2-4)

In Jeremiah 51 YHWH referred to Israel as his club against Babylon. This must have given Israel a sense of purpose and hope because they were struggling in Babylonian exile.

> You are My war club, [My] weapons of battle; With you I clubbed nations, With you I destroyed kingdoms; with you I clubbed horse and rider, With you I clubbed chariot and driver, With you I clubbed man and woman, With you I clubbed graybeard and boy, With you I clubbed youth and maiden; With you I clubbed shepherd and flock, With you I clubbed plowman and team, With you I clubbed governors and prefects. But I will requite Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea For all the wicked things they did to Zion before your eyes —declares the LORD. (Jer 51:20-24)

This gave them hope that they could be useful in YHWH's plan again. YHWH stated earlier: "For Israel and Judah were not bereft of their God the Lord of Hosts, But their land was filled with guilt before the Holy One of Israel" (Jer 51:4).

Haggai 2 is pictured sharing YHWH's words to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, as he was preparing to restore the temple during the reign of Darius of Persia.

> On the twenty-first day of the seventh month, the word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai: Speak to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and to the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak, and to the rest of the people: Who is there left among you who saw this House in its former splendor? How does it look to you now? It must seem like nothing to you. But be strong, O Zerubbabel—says the LORD—be strong, O high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak; be strong, all you people of the land—says the LORD—and act! For I am with

you—says the LORD of Hosts. So I promised you when you came out of Egypt, and My spirit is still in your midst. Fear not! (Hag 2:1-5)

The author states that YHWH affected the Israelite troops psychologically by promising to aid them, which gave them hope and encouragement. At times YHWH also affected the enemy troops psychologically by inspiring fear or confusion in them which we will explore in the next section.

3. YHWH fights psychologically for the Israelites

Since the concept of divinely-induced terror in battle is common throughout the ancient Near East, it deserves more thorough discussion as a literary convention. "Yahweh's intervention in the form of confusing divine terror was an indispensable element of the tradition. What happened was that, in the panic created by Yahweh, the battle order of the enemy and often also the camp came into such confusion that sometimes the enemies destroyed each other" (Rad 49).

Some of these examples show that YHWH's terror accompanied a physical manifestation of his power. Yet, several of these instances illustrate a vague sense of fear or confusion which swept over the enemy forces for no visible reason. This confusion typically caused the enemy troops to flee the battle scene, or to begin battling fellow warriors, especially unfamiliar mercenary forces.[194] For the purposes of this study, such a manifestation is called direct supernatural psychological warfare, defined as emotions which were passed directly from divinity to humanity on a spiritual level. This type of psychological warfare has not been noted in any of the preceding chapters. Each

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[194] "The theme of confusion is another theme that we encounter regularly in the Bible as well as in the other texts <of> our sample. The theme comes down to the following: the enemy is unsettled by divine intervention or by a trick to such an extent that he is disoriented, panics and flees" (Deijl 291).

previous instance of psychological warfare involved some words or actions which

conveyed a message to enemy or national troops. Although YHWH is portrayed using

the conventional methods as well, he alone entered into this supernatural type of warfare.

<u>Moses</u>

This first portrayal of YHWH's terror is actually underlying a narrative in Exodus

3. As the Israelites were leaving their slavery in Egypt YHWH caused the Egyptian

people to be favorably disposed toward the Israelites and allow them to take their

treasures from their homes.

> "Go and assemble the elders of Israel and say to them: the LORD, the God of
> your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, has appeared to me and said,
> 'I have taken note of you and of what is being done to you in Egypt, and I have
> declared: I will take you out of the misery of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites,
> the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, to a land
> flowing with milk and honey.' They will listen to you; then you shall go with the
> elders of Israel to the king of Egypt and you shall say to him, 'The LORD, the
> God of the Hebrews, manifested Himself to us. Now therefore, let us go a
> distance of three days into the wilderness to sacrifice to the LORD our God.' Yet
> I know that the king of Egypt will let you go only because of a greater might. So I
> will stretch out My hand and smite Egypt with various wonders which I will work
> upon them; after that he shall let you go. And I will dispose the Egyptians
> favorably toward this people, so that when you go, you will not go away
> emptyhanded. Each woman shall borrow from her neighbor and the lodger in her
> house objects of silver and gold, and clothing, and you shall put these on your
> sons and daughters, thus stripping the Egyptians." (Exod 3:16-22)

When the Israelites asked (שׁאל) the Egyptians for their precious belongings why

did they entrust them to the Israelites? They wanted the Israelites gone and they were

willing to risk being plundered (נצל) to see that happen. Exodus 12 shares the rest of this

story and there the Israelites are pictured asking for these treasures just after YHWH's

tenth plague upon the Egyptians, the death of each Egyptian family's firstborn. This

plague would have instilled terror in each Egyptian's heart, and they would see the loss of

their gold and silver as a small price to pay for YHWH to leave them alone.

In Exodus 14 we find that Pharaoh has finally allowed the Israelites to leave Egypt and the Biblical author wrote that YHWH "stiffened" חזק Pharaoh's heart. חזק means to strengthen something (Brown 304). YHWH did the exact opposite of filling Pharaoh's heart with terror, he filled him with an unreasonable hope to his detriment and demise.

> He ordered his chariot and took his men with him; he took six hundred of his picked chariots, and the rest of the chariots of Egypt, with officers in all of them. The LORD stiffened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and he gave chase to the Israelites. As the Israelites were departing defiantly, the Egyptians gave chase to them, and all the chariot horses of Pharaoh, his horsemen, and his warriors overtook them encamped by the sea, near Pi-hahiroth, before Baal-zephon. (Exod 14:6-9)

As the Israelites entered the land of Canaan the Biblical author wrote that word of Israel's exploits preceded them, YHWH also is portrayed stating that he added fear and dread to the hearts of those who heard about Israel. "This day I begin to put the dread and fear of you upon the peoples everywhere under heaven, so that they shall tremble and quake because of you when they hear you mentioned" (Deut 2:25); and "No man shall stand up to you; the LORD your God will put the dread and fear of you over the whole land in which you set foot, as He promised you" (Deut 11:25).

<u>Joshua</u>

In Joshua 10 YHWH is depicted causing a panic among the soldiers of the five Amorite kings whom Joshua defeated.[195] "Joshua took them by surprise, marching all night from Gilgal. The LORD threw them into a panic before Israel" (Josh 10:10).

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[195] This passage is also treated on pages 100, 134, 146-147 and 166 in this dissertation.

In Joshua 11, as the Israelites battled several regional kings, the author stated that YHWH hardened (חזק) these kings' hearts so they fought against Israel rather than accepting peace with them. YHWH is portrayed directly imposing himself in the process by causing these kings to engage Israel in battle. "For it was the LORD's doing to stiffen their hearts to give battle to Israel, in order that they might be proscribed without quarter and wiped out, as the LORD had commanded Moses" (Josh 11:20).

Judges

Judges 7 relates the story of Gideon's defeat of the Midianites with only 300 men, trumpets and torches. We find that YHWH is given credit for turning the Midianites against each other in the confusion that ensued after the 300 men broke their pots, brandished their torches and cried out.[196] "For when the three hundred horns were sounded, the LORD turned every man's sword against his fellow, throughout the camp, and the entire host fled as far as Beth-shittah and on to Zererah—as far as the outskirts of Abel-meholah near Tabbath" (Judg 7:22).

Monarchial

YHWH intervened in Israel's battle with the Philistines portrayed in 1 Samuel 7. The author of this story builds tension by describing Samuel in the midst of offering a sacrifice to YHWH as the Philistines were advancing toward the Israelites. Samuel seems to be preoccupied by religious ritual while the pressing need was to prepare the troops for battle: "For as Samuel was presenting the burnt offering and the Philistines

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[196] "God may reveal his strength and Israel's weakness by ordering the army to be small in number on purpose (…) God thus selects his soldiers in an entirely arbitrary or random manner and cuts the potential army to a force of only three hundred men" (Niditch 143-144).

advanced to attack Israel, the LORD thundered mightily against the Philistines that day. He threw them into confusion, and they were routed by Israel" (1 Sam 7:10).

The story depicted in 1 Samuel 11 contains every type of psychological warfare presented in this dissertation.[197] Nahash the Ammonite agreed to a treaty with Jabesh-Gilead if each person would allow their right eye to be gouged out. When Saul found out about this he cut up a team of oxen and sent the pieces to the other tribes to gather an army. The Israelites did gather and the situation was resolved by divine intervention when the terror of YHWH fell upon Israel and they defeated Nahash soundly (1 Sam 11:7). The Hebrew word פחד was translated 'terror' in 1 Samuel 11:7 and it means to have 'dread' or 'awe' of something (Brown 808). It is an interesting twist that the *Israelites* were terrified and it caused them to *win* the battle, typically YHWH's enemies were terrified and that terror enabled them to be defeated.[198]

1 Samuel 14 reports a terror from YHWH came upon the Philistines battling Jonathan at a Philistine outpost and that the terror spread throughout all of the troops.[199] "Terror broke out among all the troops both in the camp [and] in the field; the outposts and the raiders were also terrified. The very earth quaked, and a terror from God ensued" (1 Sam 14:15).

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[197] See the further treatment of this passage in this dissertation on pages 66, 86-87, 90-91 and 150-151.

[198] See McCarter 1980, pp. 203-204 for a similar observation.

[199] This passage is also treated on pages 72, 91 and 152 in this dissertation.

2 Samuel 5 reports a Philistine array against King David and the Israelite army.
YHWH instructs David to wait for a specific signal which would both embolden the
Israelite troops and cause fear in the Philistines.

> David inquired of the LORD, and He answered, "Do not go up, but circle around
> behind them and confront them at the baca trees. And when you hear the sound
> of marching in the tops of the baca trees, then go into action, for the LORD will
> be going in front of you to attack the Philistine forces." David did as the LORD
> had commanded him; and he routed the Philistines from Geba all the way to
> Gezer[200] (2 Sam 5:23-25).

2 Chronicles 14 relates a battle between Asa king of Judah and the Cushites. Asa
knew that he was overmatched by the Cushite forces and he pleaded for YHWH to
intervene. YHWH did intervene by sending a terror which drove the Cushites away.

> So the LORD routed the Cushites before Asa and Judah, and the Cushites fled.
> Asa and the army with him pursued them as far as Gerar. Many of the Cushites
> fell wounded beyond recovery, for they broke before the LORD and His camp.
> Very much spoil was taken. All the cities in the vicinity of Gerar were ravaged,
> for a terror of the LORD seized them. All the cities were plundered, and they
> yielded much booty." (2 Chr 14:11-13)

2 Chronicles 17 reports that Judean king Jehoshaphat experienced peace and
prosperity during his reign. The author attributed this equanimity to YHWH: "A terror
of the LORD seized all the kingdoms of the lands around Judah, and they did not go to
war with Jehoshaphat" (2 Chr 17:10).

YHWH is not only portrayed inspiring fear on a supernatural level, at times he
also fought for the Israelites in tangible ways. This next section explores instances of

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[200] "Each day the sea breeze from the Mediterranean reaches Jerusalem around
noontime, arriving quite suddenly and sometimes with strong gusts. This, then, was 'the
sound of [Yahweh's] steps in the tops of the Baka-bushes,' of which the text speaks. The
sound of the wind in the trees and bushes would have permitted David's army to move
from their positions deep in the woods to the tree line next to the Philistine assembly area
without being detected, catching the Philistines by complete surprise and unformed for
battle" (Gabriel 2003, 245).

YHWH fighting physically which psychologically affected both the enemy and national troops.

4. YHWH fights physically for the Israelites

The Hebrew Bible identifies several instances where YHWH is portrayed causing some physical phenomenon to happen which killed many enemy troops, or caused fear and confusion in them.[201] In either case the resolve and will of the enemy troops were dealt a blow from which they could not recover. Weimar detailed a pattern which is discernable in such passages.

> According to Weimar, these narratives in their earliest form shared a common structure: (a) an enemy takes action against Israel; (b) Israel becomes discouraged; (c) a prophet urges confidence and faith in Yahweh; (d) Yahweh intervenes and put the enemy to rout; (e) Israel's only action is to pursue the routed enemy (Ollenburger 31).

YHWH is always presented as justified in his actions against the enemy.

> Yet, while God is described as a 'warrior' (Ex. 15:3), one who 'goes forth like a warrior' (Isa. 42:13), and one who is 'mighty in battle' (Ps. 24:8), He is never a 'man of violence' and is no-where associated with violence or with illegal and unjust action. In punishing Israel or a gentile nation, no matter how fierce His anger or how violent His retribution, God was always the God of justice (rewarding and punishing justly), the Judge of all the earth who deals justly (cf. Gen. 18:25), always true to His word (Num. 23:19). (Orlinsky in Baron 46-47)

While several of YHWH's acts are supernatural they are not presented as magical, in the sense that some ritual or incantation could force YHWH to respond in a certain way. This is not a picture of humanity controlling, or calling, the divine, rather it is the

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[201] "Finally, one can see that in the ancient Near East divine intervention may come in the form of a miracle sign. On the one hand, the truthfulness of such utterances is to be sought in the subjective sphere of religious intuition, and not in a literal interpretation of the words. On the other hand, the ancient text may simply be recording something which it is not now possible to identify and explain by scientific means" (Younger 1990, 220).

divine acting of its own volition uniquely in each instance. Sometimes YHWH is presented using armies or other forces (Ollenburger 11) and sometimes he is represented "as a solitary warrior, fighting alone, using various weapons against foes ranging from enemy nations to the forces of chaos" (Ollenburger 11). There is no discernable pattern in why YHWH chose to perform a physical act, or in how YHWH acted. The motivation and the method are presented as YHWH's alone and humanity simply is the recipient of YHWH's beneficence or malevolence. Rad explained "No one will deny there is an array of magical residues, but they are strikingly undercut by one factor which is far more dominant – namely, Yahweh's freedom and unpredictability, which no magical chain of power can bind" (Rad 71). He continued "Yet within that sphere in which no Israelite sets foot, Yahweh alone is active with his miracles" (Rad 87).

In Joshua 10 the Biblical author details an instance where YHWH is credited with hurling stones down upon the Amorites:[202]

> "[Joshua] inflicted a crushing defeat on them at Gibeon, pursued them in the direction of the Beth-horon ascent, and harried them all the way to Azekah and Makkedah. While they were fleeing before Israel down the descent from Beth-horon, the LORD hurled huge stones on them from the sky, all the way to Azekah, and they perished; more perished from the hailstones than were killed by the Israelite weapons." (Josh 10:8-11)

YHWH is depicted terrorizing the Philistines by smashing their god Dagon in 1 Samuel 5. The Philistines had captured the Ark of the Covenant at Aphek-Ebenezer and placed this trophy in the temple of their god Dagon. This practice was common in the ancient Near East and according to Gabriel should be understood as a syncretistic act.

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[202] "At the centre of the picture stand the wonders performed by Yahweh in breaking down the forces of Israel's opponents. Defeat of the enemy is always, in the final analysis, divine victory" (Krasovec 320).
This passage is also treated on page 100 in this dissertation.

"In ancient times, all armies carried their national gods with them on campaign, and it was a common practice to capture the gods of the enemy. The biblical text portrays the capture of the Ark by the Philistines as a national disaster, almost sacrilegious in nature, while to the Philistines it was no such thing. It is often believed that the religions of the ancient world routinely distinguished between their own true gods and the false gods of others as modern religions do. In fact, this was not the case. In the ancient world polytheism functioned as a vehicle of cultural transmission and drew no distinctions among deities with regard to their being true or false. (…) When cultures came into contact, they identified foreign gods as simply different forms of their own gods and often incorporated them into their pantheons. This syncretism was a near universal practice among the more complex countries of the ancient Near East until the time of Moses, whose introduction of monotheism asserted that only the god of the Israelites was genuine and all other gods were false, an idea that led directly to the condemnation of the worship of other gods as idolatry" (Gabriel 2003, 193).

The Biblical text records this scene the next morning.

> Early the next day, the Ashdodites found Dagon lying face down on the ground in front of the Ark of the LORD. They picked up Dagon and put him back in his place; but early the next morning, Dagon was again lying prone on the ground in front of the Ark of the LORD. The head and both hands of Dagon were cut off, lying on the threshold; only Dagon's trunk was left intact. . . . The hand of the LORD was heavy upon the Ashdodites, and He wrought havoc among them: He struck Ashdod and its territory with hemorrhoids. (1 Sam 5:3-4, 6)

The Philistines would have been shocked them because they would assume that they had

captured a weak deity now controlled by their deity.

> "These shaming actions prove Dagon's inferiority to YHWH's superior power and dominance, and it is the Philistines who have to return the ark of God submissively to arrest his anger. This incident resembles the Assyrian practice of capture and spoilation of images of defeated gods, but in reverse. It is the superiority and power of the defeated that is demonstrated" (Huber 189).

> YHWH is portrayed acting physically for Israel several times as noted above. In

those instances just mentioned YHWH was working in tandem with Israel and his

physical intervention was an aid to Israel.

5. YHWH wins the battle for the Israelites

This feature of divine intervention is unique in ancient Israel. In other nations the gods were given credit for battles won, but it was an ambiguous general statement about how a nation's god assisted the troops in the battle. When YHWH is portrayed winning battles alone he was acting outside of the realm of human volition, simply accomplishing his will, in his way, in his timing.

YHWH is depicted defeating nations in a variety of ways both physical and psychological. His goals were to defeat the nation being affected, to inspire the Israelites to a greater faith and dependence upon him, and to cause fear to rise up in the hearts of other nations.

In Exodus 14 YHWH is pictured stopping Pharaoh's chariots from reaching the Israelites: "He locked the wheels of their chariots so that they moved forward with difficulty" (Exod 14:25), and then crushing his troops with water: "Moses held out his arm over the sea, and at daybreak the sea returned to its normal state, and the Egyptians fled at its approach. But the LORD hurled the Egyptians into the sea; not one of them remained" (Exod 14:27-28).

In 2 Kings 6 the Biblical author pictures the king of Aram sending troops to capture Elisha the prophet who was warning Jehoram the king of Israel where Aramean forces were being stationed. When Elisha's servant saw the soldiers surrounding them he was frightened:

> When the attendant of the man of God rose early and went outside, he saw a force, with horses and chariots, surrounding the town. "Alas, master, what shall we do?" his servant asked him. "Have no fear," he replied. "There are more on our side than on theirs."Then
> Elisha prayed: "LORD, open his eyes and let him see." And the LORD opened the servant's eyes and he saw the hills all around Elisha covered with horses and

chariots of fire. [The Arameans] came down against him, and Elisha prayed to the LORD: "Please strike this people with blinding light." And He struck them with a blinding light, as Elisha had asked. Elisha said to them, "This is not the road, and that is not the town; follow me, and I will lead you to the man you want." And he led them to Samaria. When they entered Samaria, Elisha said, "O LORD, open the eyes of these men so that they may see." The LORD opened their eyes and they saw that they were inside Samaria. When the king of Israel saw them, he said to Elisha, "Father, shall I strike them down?" "No, do not," he replied. "Did you take them captive with your sword and bow that you would strike them down? Rather, set food and drink before them, and let them eat and drink and return to their master." So he prepared a lavish feast for them and, after they had eaten and drunk, he let them go, and they returned to their master. And the Aramean bands stopped invading the land of Israel. (2 Kgs 6:15-23)

This story breaks from the typical pattern of -- YHWH's intervention, followed by Israelite success, and the military defeat of the enemy. Instead these troops were led blindly into Israel's stronghold, Samaria, their lives were spared and they were given a lavish feast; this surprising turn of events so confounded the Arameans that they stopped trying to attack Israel.

In 2 Kings 7 Jehoram and the nation of Israel are pictured being besieged by Arameans and became desperate for food. Just as the siege was becoming unbearable the prophet Elisha prophesied that food would be plentiful by that same time the next day. The authoer portrays YHWH intervening, using psychological warfare; the siege was broken and food was plentiful one day later.

For the LORD had caused the Aramean camp to hear a sound of chariots, a sound of horses—the din of a huge army. They said to one another, 'The king of Israel must have hired the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Mizraim to attack us!' And they fled headlong into the twilight, abandoning their tents and horses and asses—the [entire] camp just as it was—as they fled for their lives. (2 Kgs 7:6-7)

Isaiah 37 depicts YHWH's defeat of Sennacherib and the Assyrian force he brought against Jerusalem and King Hezekiah of Judah. "[That night] an angel of the

LORD when out and struck down one hundred and eighty-five thousand in the Assyrian camp, and the following morning they were all dead corpses" (Isa 37:36).[203]

6. Conclusion

In this chapter we have reviewed YHWH's role in ancient Israelite warfare. We noted that in the premonarchial period Israel was involved in Holy War which was warfare inspired by, and executed by, the will of YHWH. With the advent of monarchy other motives and methods were introduced which changed Israelite warfare.

We observed that at times YHWH is portrayed affecting the Israelites by promising to give them victory over an enemy, and conversely we saw that at times YHWH inspired fear and confusion in the enemy troops, through physical and/or psychological means. We also examined passages that portray YHWH being actively involved in warfare physically, either assisting Israel in battle or winning the battle outright.

This dissertation will now conclude with a review of materials covered, major points concluded, and the relationship of Israelite psychological warfare to psychological warfare in surrounding ancient Near Eastern nations. Finally, I will present potential research topics raised by this basic overview of psychological warfare in the Hebrew Bible.

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[203] Cf. 2 Kgs 19:32-36.

VII.

 CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation contends that warfare, defensive warfare in particular, was one of the most significant responsibilities of any nation in the ancient Near East and that psychological warfare was one of the most important, if not the most important, military strategy used. Nearly every battle involved some psychological tactic that typically brought about a turning point in the battle, or the avoidance of physical conflict altogether.

The foundational definition of psychological warfare used in this dissertation was taken from *A Psychological Warfare Casebook* :

> psychological warfare may be defined as the planned use of propaganda and other actions designed to influence the opinions, emotions, attitudes, and behavior of enemy, neutral, and friendly foreign groups in such a way as to support the accomplishment of national aims and objectives. (Daugherty 2)

The goal of this dissertation was to answer the following questions. 'Does the Hebrew Bible portray ancient Israel employing psychological warfare?' And if so, 'How is ancient Israel portrayed implementing psychological warfare?'[204] We determined that Ancient Israel is depicted employing psychological warfare and we established the typology, prevalence and importance of psychological warfare.   The types of psychological warfare portrayed were propaganda, physical intimidation, rallying the troops and divine intervention.

In the chapter "Psychological Warfare Practiced in the Ancient Near East Outside of Israel" we found that ancient Near Eastern texts outside of the Hebrew Bible portray

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[204] These questions were raised on page 2 of this dissertation.

other nations employing these types of psychological warfare as well. We ascertained that psychological warfare was a commonality between the Biblical text and other ancient Near Eastern texts. This understanding validated the typology which was being applied to the Hebrew Bible.

In the chapter "Propaganda in the Hebrew Bible" we established that propaganda was the war of words which preceded or affected a battle. The first stage of propaganda was diplomacy which involved treaties or covenants between two parties. Diplomacy should be considered propaganda since it involved trying to win an enemy over without a battle -- but the prospect of a battle loomed if the enemy did not agree to the treaty. If diplomacy did not circumvent conflict then threats were exchanged. Threats were the most obvious way of trying to sway the enemy with words. Threats led to battle if there was no resolution. Advance word of the power or magnitude of an army was also propaganda. The supposition was that a force could spread advance word of troop size, victories or capabilities that would filter back to, and negatively affect their enemies. Armies would often spread advance word of their military prowess in hopes of convincing an enemy to succumb without battle.

We found that both ancient Israel and other ancient Near Eastern nations are portrayed using diplomacy to circumvent war. Through treaties and covenants they were often able to work out amicable relations without battle. If there was not resolution via diplomacy then the rhetoric often escalated into threats of physical harm. Nations practiced espionage to gather information about opposing forces and to spread advance word to dishearten the enemy. If propaganda did not avert a battle then the next step was physical intimidation.

In the chapter "Physical Intimidation in the Hebrew Bible" we established that physical intimidation was an army's physical attempt to break the morale of an opposing force. These physical acts could be directed against opposing rulers or officials, against innocent people as a warning, or against enemy combatants. Physical intimidation involved more than typical battle tactics. Acts of this nature could include public display of corpses, humiliation through dismemberment, torture, nakedness, impalement and selective killing.

In this dissertation physical intimidation was divided into the following subcategories: terrorism, humiliation of a leader, shaming and troop array.

Terrorism involved the torture and/or death of a small number of people to send a message to a larger group. Sometimes these terroristic acts appeared to be randomly cruel when in fact they were usually a calculated attempt to dissuade a nation from resisting the aggressor's demands. One form of terrorism was humiliating a nation's leader. The humiliation of a leader was accomplished by either maiming the leader so that he became a living symbol of his nation's weakness, and the conquering nation's superiority; or by killing him in some horrific way that would be an example to his nation in general, and future leaders in particular.

Shaming involved humiliating troops by feminizing them or exposing their weakness. Forced nakedness was a common way of shaming others, leaving them feeling vulnerable, uncomfortable and childlike.

Armies also tried to intimidate each other by the show of force, or displaying sacred objects, colors or banners. Their troop arrays were meant to display strength and vitality which both encouraged the national troops and discouraged the enemy troops.

Ancient Near Eastern nations are portrayed using physical intimidation to avoid war, or affect the outcome of war.   The same types of physical intimidation were depicted in the Hebrew Bible. If warfare could not be avoided by the use of propaganda or physical intimidation, the warring parties prepared their troops for battle physically and emotionally.

Next, in the chapter "Rallying the Troops in the Hebrew Bible" we found that military leaders understood that battles would be won or lost because of the motivation of their troops. While other types of psychological warfare were aimed at opposing troops, rallying the troops involved affecting national troops through words and/or actions. Some acts or words were intended to both demoralize the enemy and lift the spirits of the national troops. This rallying was done by the king, by an army official, or a religious official. Rallying words included positive and affirming remarks about their skills, or about the inferiority of the opponent, or about how their god would help them.

Sometimes the author portrayed the use of words which were negative and meant to induce fearful earnestness in the national troops. This negative psychological warfare was portrayed particularly in regard to YHWH's desire for Israel and her soldiers to remain faithful to the law in or out of battle. The instances of rallying the troops were categorized by the use of words or actions.

All nations are depicted using similar methods to rally their troops - such as mass ceremonies, taking vows and invoking the deity. When necessary, military leaders also used negative reinforcement to challenge their own troops to remain focused upon the battle before them rather than the promise of booty or the fear of death in battle. Israel's troop preparation was similar to that portrayed other ancient Near Eastern texts, with two

exceptions. First, there was an emphasis upon physical and spiritual purity before their

god, YHWH. YHWH was portrayed to be in the army's camp with the soldiers and was

aware of the cleanliness and purity of the Israelite soldiers and camp.[205] Secondly, in

Deuteronomy 20 (which gives a detailed account of the psychological, emotional and

spiritual preparation of the Israelite troops) the Israelites were instructed that when they

were besieging a city they were not to destroy the trees surrounding the city (Deut 20:19-

20). Although this stance is not fully explained in the text it is a starkly different position

than that of other ancient Near Eastern nations who did employ this type of physical

intimidation.[206]

Finally, in the chapter "Divine Intervention in the Hebrew Bible" we established

that divine intervention is a Biblical author's assertion that YHWH affected either enemy

or Israelite troops physically or psychologically and thus changed the outcome of a

battle. Sometimes YHWH is portrayed as affecting his own troops positively by assuring

them that he would support them in their battle. In most of the instances of divine

intervention, YHWH assisted Israel's army in winning a battle while the army actually

did the fighting, but periodically YHWH just defeated an enemy while Israel watched.

The instances of divine intervention were typed by the times YHWH promised to help

Israel win a battle, inspired fear or confusion in an army, used physical means to affect an

army, or defeated an enemy without the aid of the Israelites.

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[205] In this dissertation see page 142 which explains that the Israelites were to cover up their bowel movements since YHWH was moving around their camp (Deut 23:12-14). See also page 157-160 which established that the Israelite army must be holy warriors serving a holy god.

[206] See pages 127 in this dissertation for this discussion. Also, see page 31 in this dissertation for examples of other ancient Near Eastern nations destroying trees.

Other ancient Near Eastern cultures also acknowledged divine intervention in their warfare. Nations felt that their battles were actually battles between their gods, and they ascribed victories to their deities. The major point of divergence between the use of psychological warfare in the Hebrew Bible and in the other ancient Near Eastern texts is that YHWH is portrayed not only assisting Israel in their battles, He is also shown to be instrumental in the outcome of many battles; either by rallying Israelite troops, confusing enemy troops or winning the battle outright for Israel.[207] "God always holds the actantial position of destinateur in the biblical war stories. Without always having to explicitly appear on stage, he is the one who turns out to hold all the strings" (Deijl 289). The ancient Near Eastern nations' gods are not portrayed to have an active role in battles; whereas YHWH was literally viewed as a combatant in the battle, many times in a physical rather than figurative sense. "The basic difference between the biblical and non-biblical attitudes is that non-biblical ancient documents seem to reflect a 'natural' belief in cosmic, inbuilt moral order, whereas the Bible acknowledges direct divine intervention as well" (Krasovec 319).

This survey of psychological warfare in the ancient Near East and Ancient Israel opens the way for further research into each of the types of psychological warfare presented. Such analysis could explicate methodologies and motives more fully.

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[207] "Friedrich Schwally was one of the first modern scholars to write about the concept of 'holy war'. He wrote at the beginning of the twentieth century. In his work, he compared the biblical text with other ancient Near Eastern martial literature and found that all of the cultures in the region claimed their god's assistance in battle. Only Israel, according to Schwally, expressed the belief that it was unnecessary for the warriors to fight because Yahweh would do their fighting for them. Some scholars still maintain the distinction" (Rowlett 51).

Additional studies could trace the development of Jewish use of psychological warfare through the Medo-Persian and Greco-Roman periods.

APPENDIX A:

HEBREW BIBLE PASSAGES CONTAINING INSTANCES OF PSYCHOLOGICAL

WARFARE ARRANGED BY TYPE:

Propaganda passages

Passage	Propaganda	Treaty	Advance Word	Threats
Gen 26:26-31	1	1	0	0
Gen 33:8-11	1	1	0	0
Gen 34:13-17, 24-25	1	1	0	0
Num 14:11-19	1	0	1	0
Num 20:18-21	1	1	0	0
Num 21:21-25	1	1	0	0
Num 22:2-4	1	0	1	0
Josh 2:8-11	1	0	1	0
Josh 5:1	1	0	1	0
Josh 9:1-2	1	0	1	0
Josh 9:3-25	1	1	1	0
Judg 8:7-9, 13-17	1	0	0	1
Judg 11:12	1	0	0	1
1 Sam 4:1-8	1	0	1	0
1 Sam 11:1-11	1	1	0	1
1 Sam 14:6-15	1	0	0	1
1 Sam 17:8-11	1	0	0	1
1 Sam 25:18-25	1	1	0	0
1 Sam 26:12-16	1	0	0	1
2 Sam 5:6-8	1	0	0	1
2 Sam 10:19	1	1	1	0
2 Sam 20:15-22	1	1	0	0
1 Kgs 20:1-3	1	0	0	1
1 Kgs 20:10-11	1	0	0	1
2 Kgs 5:4-7	1	0	0	0
2 Kgs 14:8-14	1	0	0	1
2 Kgs 18:17-37; cf. Isaiah 36	1	0	0	1

Passage	Propaganda	Treaty	Advance Word	Threats
2 Chr 10:10-11	1	0	0	1
2 Chr 13:4-12	1	0	0	1
2 Chr 16:2-3	1	1	0	0
2 Chr 20:2-30	1	0	1	0
2 Chr 26:11-15	1	0	1	0
2 Chr 35:20-2	1	0	0	1
Neh 6:11-16	1	0	0	1
Isa 36; cf. 2 Kgs. 18	1	1	0	0
Jer 51:54-64	1	0	0	1

Physical intimidation passages

Passage	Physical Intimidation	Humiliate Leader	Shaming	Array or Display of Troops	Harm
Josh 8:16-29	1	1	0	0	0
Josh 10:8-11	1	0	0	1	0
Josh 10:24-27	1	1	0	0	0
Judg 3:12	1	1	0	0	0
Judg 7:16-22	1	0	0	1	0
Judg 8:7-9, 13-17	1	0	0	0	1
Judg 8:18-21	1	1	0	0	0
Judg 9:52-55	1	1	1	0	0
1 Sam 4:1-8	1	0	0	1	0
1 Sam 7:10-11	1	0	0	1	0
1 Sam 11:1-11	1	0	1	0	1
1 Sam 13:4-8	1	0	0	1	0
1 Sam 14:16-24	1	0	0	0	0
1 Sam 15:32-33	1	1	0	0	0
1 Sam 17:45-54	1	1	0	0	0
1 Sam 24:3-16	1	1	1	0	0
1 Sam 26:12-16	1	1	1	0	0
1 Sam 31:8-13	1	1	0	0	0
2 Sam 4:1-12	1	0	0	0	1
2 Sam 8:2	1	0	0	0	1
2 Sam 10:4-5	1	0	1	0	0
2 Sam 16:21	1	1	0	0	0
2 Sam 20:15-22	1	0	0	1	0
2 Kgs 14:8-14	1	0	0	0	1
2 Kgs 15:16 cf. 2 Kgs 8:12	1	0	0	0	1
2 Chr 20:2-30	1	0	0	1	0
2 Chr 25:7-12	1	0	0	0	1
2 Chr 26:11-15	1	0	0	1	0
Song 6:4	1	0	0	1	0
Isa 36; cf. 2 Kgs. 18	1	1	0	1	0
Jer 52:11	1	1	0	0	0

Rallying the troops passages

Passage	Rallying Troops	Actions	Words
Exod 17:8-16, cf. Deut. 25: 17-19, 1 Sa 15:2-3	1	1	0
Num 1:20-45; 52	1	0	1
Num 10:9-10	1	1	0
Num 14:5-10	1	1	0
Num 14:39-45	1	1	1
Num 21:32-35	1	0	1
Deut 1:28-32	1	0	1
Deut 3:21-22	1	0	1
Deut 4:32-39; cf. 7-8	1	0	1
Deut 31:1-6, 7, 23	1	0	1
Josh 1:5-11	1	1	1
Josh 2:24	1	0	1
Josh 3:5-11	1	1	1
Josh 5:2-8	1	1	0
Josh 6:1-25	1	1	1
Josh 7:10-13	1	1	1
Josh 8:16-29	1	1	0
Josh 10:8-11	1	0	1
Josh 10:24-27	1	1	1
Judg 3:12->	1	1	0
Judg 3:27	1	1	0
Judg 6:12-16	1	0	1
Judg 7:3-6	1	1	0
Judg 8:7-9, 13-17	1	0	1
Judg 8:18-21	1	1	0
Judg 19:29-30	1	1	0
Judg 20:22-31	1	1	0
1 Sam 4:1 -8	1	1	1
1 Sam 4:9-11	1	0	1
1 Sam 11:1-11	1	1	1
1 Sam 13:4-8	1	1	0
1 Sam 14:6-15	1	0	1
1 Sam 14:16-24	1	1	1

Passage	Rallying Troops	Actions	Words
1 Sam 15:1-6	1	0	1
1 Sam 17:45-54	1	1	0
1 Sam 31:8-13	1	1	0
2 Sam 10:12-18	1	0	1
2 Sam 19:7	1	0	1
2 Sam 21:17	1	1	0
2 Kgs 3:26-27	1	1	0
2 Chr 13:4-12	1	0	1
2 Chr 20:2-30	1	1	0
2 Chr 32:6-8	1	0	1
Neh 4:1-17	1	1	0
Isa 7:2-4	1	0	1

Divine intervention passages

Passage	Divine Intervention	YHWH rallies	YHWH fights psycho-logically	YHWH fights phys-ically	YHWH wins the battle
Exod 3:16-22	1	0	1	0	0
Exod 14:6-9	1	0	1	0	0
Exod 14:23-29	1	0	1	1	0
Exod 17:8-16	1	0	0	0	1
Num 21:32-35	1	1	0	0	0
Deut 31:1-6, 7, 23	1	1	0	0	0
Josh 1:5-11	1	1	0	0	0
Josh 2:8-11	1	0	1	0	0
Josh 2:24	1	1	1	0	0
Josh 3:5-11	1	1	0	0	0
Josh 4:14	1	0	0	0	0
Josh 5:1	1	0	1	1	0
Josh 6:1-25	1	1	0	0	0
Josh 7:10-13	1	1	0	0	0
Josh 8:16-29	1	1	0	0	0
Josh 10:8-11	1	1	1	1	0
Judg 6:12-16	1	1	0	0	0
Judg 7:3-6	1	0	0	0	0
Judg 7:16-22	1	0	1	0	0
Judg 11:12	1	1	0	0	0
Judg 20:22-31	1	1	0	0	0
1 Sam 7:10-11	1	0	1	0	0
1 Sam 11:1-11	1	0	1	0	0
1 Sam 14:6-15	1	1	1	0	0
1 Sam 14:16-24	1	0	1	0	0
1 Sam 15:1-6	1	1	0	0	0
1 Sam 17:45-54	1	1	0	0	0
2 Sam 5:17-25	1	1	1	1	0
2 Sam 10:12-18	1	1	0	0	0
2 Kgs 6:15-23	1	1	0	1	1
2 Kgs 7:5-6	1	0	1	0	1
2 Kgs 18:17-37; cf. Isaiah 36	1	0	0	0	0
2 Kgs 19:32-36	1	1	0	0	1

Passage	Divine Intervention	YHWH rallies	YHWH fights psycho-logically	YHWH fights phys-ically	YHWH wins the battle
2 Chr 14:11-13	1	1	1	0	1
2 Chr 17:10-11	1	0	1	0	0
2 Chr 20:2-30	1	1	1	1	1
2 Chr 25:7-12	1	1	0	0	0
Neh 4:1-17	1	0	1	0	0
Isa 37:33-36	1	1	0	1	1
Isa 7:2-4	1	1	0	0	0
Isa 37:5-7	1	1	0	0	0
Jer 51:54-64	1	1	0	0	0
Hag 2:1-5	1	1	1	1	1

APPENDIX B:

HEBREW BIBLE PASSAGES WHICH ARE RELATED TO PSYCHOLOGICAL

WARFARE

Exod 15:1-8   Moses' song - all credit is given to YHWH

Exod 19:3-6   Israel is YHWH's treasured possession, a holy nation

Exod 23:20-23, 33:2   YHWH's messengers will guard Israel and defeat enemies

Exod 23:27-33 YHWH will send terror, hornets on enemies

Exod 33:2; 23:20-23   YHWH's messengers will guard Israel

Exod 34:11-14   YHWH will drive out nations

Lev 26:36-39   Israel will stumble with fear

Num 21:14   Book of the Wars of the Lord

Deut 1:19-21   YHWH remembers telling Israel not to fear Amorites

Deut 2:24-25   Moses remembers the defeat of Sihon; dread and fear of Israel begins

Deut 2:30-31   YHWH hardened Sihon's heart

Deut 6:18-19   If Israel obeys YHWH he will drive nations out before them

Deut 7:1-8   YHWH will clear out nations, not because of Israel but because he chose

        them

Deut 7:16-26   YHWH rallies the Israelites – have no pity, have no fear, Israel is

consecrated,

Deut 9:4-6   YHWH will clear nations out because of their sin, not because of Israel's

        righteousness

Deut 11:22-25 YHWH will drive out; no one will be able to stand up against them; dread

Deut 24:5 a recently married person exempt from military service for one year

    (cf. Deut 20)

Deut 25:17-19, cf. Exod 17:8-16, 1 Sam 15:2-3 remembering Amalek's attack in

    wilderness

Deut 28:1-14 enemies will attack on one road and flee on many

Deut 28:25-26 if Israel disobeys YHWH they will attack on one road and flee on many

Deut 32:36-43 YHWH's arrows, sword will vindicate Israel

Josh 8:1-2 Ai; first defeat helped second victory

Josh 23:4-13 v. 5 YHWH will drive out nations; v. 9 YHWH has driven out nations

Josh 24:12-13 YHWH sent plague (hornets in other translations) to drive out nations

Judg 1:19 YHWH with Judah, took hill country, but not plains (iron chariots)

1Kgs 8:44-45 Solomon's prayer - battle

Ps 44:1-9, sim Ps 33 YHWH the warrior

Ps 2:8-12 Israel can smash other nations with an iron mace

Ps 3:7-8 YHWH slaps enemies in the face and breaks their teeth

Ps 7:10-13 YHWH the warrior

Ps 9:2-9 YHWH the warrior

Ps 18:34-45 confidence from YHWH

Ps 20:6-10 trust YHWH - not chariots

Ps 21:8-114 YHWH the warrior

Ps 27:3 confidence in YHWH

Ps 33:16-19 YHWH means more than a large army, great strength, and horses

Ps 45:2-6 the value of the king in battle - rally the troops descriptor

Ps 46:8-10   YHWH stops wars by breaking bows, snapping spears and burning

wagons

Ps 64:7-8   YHWH shoots arrows at the enemy who has been saying bad things about

Israel

Ps 76:4   YHWH defends Zion by breaking the fiery arrows of the bow, the shield

and the sword of war

Ps 76:13   YHWH curbs the spirit of princes and inspires awe in the kings of the

earth

Ps 78:55   YHWH expelled nations before Israel

Ps 79:10-12   asking YHWH to intercede for Israel against enemies

Ps 89:23-24   YHWH will crush adversaries

Ps 102:15-17 nations fear the name of the Lord

Ps 110:5-6   graphic description of YHWH's warrior actions - YHWH crushes kings,

works judgment on nations, heaping up bodies, crushing heads

Ps 136:17-18 his love endures forever - one attribute to be praised is that he has killed

kings

Ps 149:6-9   YHWH adorns lowly with victory,

Prov 21:31   The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but the victory rests with the

Lord.

Eccl 3:3, 8   time for killing, war

Song 6:4   Troops with banners compared with a beautiful woman

Isa 7:18-19   YHWH uses flies and bees to battle

Isa 7:20   YHWH will shame Assyria by cutting their hair - head, legs, beard

Isa 10:5-6   Assyria is YHWH's fury

Isa 13:4-8   The Lord of Hosts assembling an army; Babylon is terrified and writhing

            like a woman in travail; shaming

Isa 19:16-17   Egyptian warriors are like women - also shaming

Isa 30:15-17   Israel's best defense is repentance and stillness before YHWH;

            opposite of fear and onfusion

Isa 42:13   YHWH mighty warrior description

Jer 12:12   the sword of the YHWH

Jer 6:22-26   Israel needs to be afraid of YHWH

Jer 20:11-12   YHWH with like a mighty warrior

Jer 21:5-10   YHWH will hand Zedekiah over to Babylon

Jer 46:25-26   YHWH will punish Egypt – their god Amon, Pharaoh; using

            Nebuchadnezzar

Jer 47:6-7   sword of the YHWH personified

Jer 48:10   Cursed be he who withholds his sword from blood!

Jer 48:37-39   YHWH has broken Moab, shaved beards - shaming

Jer 48:41   Moab like women; shaming

Jer 50:25   YHWH opening his arsenal against Babylon

Jer 50:35-37   sword against the Chaldeans

Jer 51:1-4   YHWH will stir up spirit of a destroyer against Babylon

Jer 51:11-14   Medes will come against Babylon

Jer 51:20-23   Medes are YHWH's war club

Jer 51:30   Babylonian warriors are like women - shaming

Jer 51:40   YHWH will make Babylon like lambs for slaughter

Lam 2:4-5   personification of YHWH as warrior

Ezek 7:14   the war trumpet will be blown and no one will come

Ezek 14:17-18 YHWH would not save Israel even if Noah, Daniel and Job were in it

Ezek 21   the sword of the YHWH is against Jerusalem

Ezek 25-32   prophecies against Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Tyre, Egypt

Ezek 37:7-10 The valley of dry bones, those who rise up are referred to as an 'army'

Ezek 38:21-23 vv. 21-23 describes the various ways YHWH battles

Amos 1-2   Prophecy against Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, Moab, Judah,

    Israel

Amos 4:10   YHWH has attacked Israel and still they will not listen

Micah 1:6-7 YHWH will turn Samaria into a heap of rubble

Nahum 2:3-4 A description of Ninevah's troops - red shields, crimson clothing, chariots

    like flaming torches

Nahum 3:5-7 YHWH will expose Ninevah's nakedness - shaming

Nahum 3:13   Ninevah's troops are like women - shaming

Zech 9:13-15 YHWH will bend Judah like a bow

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