

Numbers 32:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But thy servants will pass over, every man armed for war,
before the LORD to battle, as my lord saith.

Analysis

But thy servants will pass over, every man armed for war, before the LORD to battle, as my lord saith—The commitment **will pass over** (יעברו ya'avru) involves crossing the Jordan and fighting **before the LORD** (לפני יהוה lifnei YHWH), characterizing warfare as occurring in God's presence under divine oversight. The phrase **every man armed for war** (כל-חולץ צבא) kol-chalutz tzava) promises comprehensive military participation—no exemptions, all available warriors.

The phrase **before the LORD** transforms military action into sacred service. Israel's wars weren't merely political conflicts but theo-political encounters where covenant people served as instruments of divine justice. The New Testament spiritualizes this: 'We do not war according to the flesh... casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God' (2 Corinthians 10:3-5)—spiritual warfare occurs 'before the LORD' as sacred kingdom service.

Historical Context

Israel's conquest wars were explicitly theo-political—God used covenant people as instruments executing judgment on Canaanite wickedness (Genesis 15:16, 'the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete'). This contrasts with modern secular warfare; Israel fought 'before the LORD' as sacred army under direct divine command, not pursuing nationalistic territorial expansion.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 – Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does the phrase 'before the LORD' transform military service into sacred ministry under divine oversight?
2. What distinguishes theocratic holy war (Israel's specific calling) from contemporary Christian participation in secular national conflicts?
3. How can you approach all life activities with the consciousness that you act 'before the LORD' under His direct observation and authority?

Interlinear Text

לפנֵי הָעָבֶד יְהוָה	לפנֵי אֲבָבָה וְעַבְדֵי יְהוָה	כָּל וְעַבְדֵר וְכָל וְעַבְדֵי יְהוָה			
But thy servants	will pass over	H3605	every man armed	for war	before
H5650	H5674		H2502	H6635	H6440
to battle	H834	as my lord	sait		H3068
H4421		H113	H1696		

Additional Cross-References

Joshua 4:12 (Parallel theme): And the children of Reuben, and the children of Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, passed over armed before the children of Israel, as Moses spake unto them: