Subject: *A Biblical View of War*
Scripture: *Ecclesiastes 3:1-8*

The word "time" is found 29 times in verses 1-8. It refers to a proper or suitable time. The word "purpose" in vs. 1 means a deliberate activity. Solomon describes many times and activities of life. Something is said about birth and death, and some things in between.

Verse 8 gives the last two pairs in the list of 14 contrasts. This verse contrasts love and hate. We should remember that all hate is not evil (Ps. 97:10) and all war is not evil. God hates certain things (Pr. 6:16-19) and God declared war against the Canaanites and fought on behalf of Israel (Josh. 23:9-10).

Down through the years much has been written and said about war. Benjamin Franklin said, "There never was a good war or a bad peace." Thomas Jefferson wrote this in a letter to John Adams, "I have seen enough of one war never to wish to see another."
On September 11, 2001, Islamic terrorists attacked America and started a war and we are still in war against them. Over a year ago Russia invaded Ukraine and started a war that still rages on. A few weeks ago the terrorist group Hamas invaded and attacked Israel and started a war and it may last for months or even years.

Christ said that we should expect wars until the end of time.
Matthew 24:6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

What does the Bible say about war? That is the subject I want to explore in this message.

There are two kinds of war:
- Wars of evil aggression
- Wars of just protection and punishment

War often reveals the worst of human nature.
James 4:1-2 From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not; ye kill and desire to have, and cannot obtain; ye fight and war, yet ye have not because ye ask not.

Why can't the people of this world get along? Envy, jealousy, greed, pride, to mention a few. The heart of the human problem is the problem of the human heart.
Plato said, "Wars are occasioned by the love of money."
Tacitus said, "Gold and riches are the chief causes of war."
An old German proverb says: "War creates three armies—an army of wounded, an army of mourners, and an army of thieves."

For the rest of this message I want to speak about wars of just protection and punishment.

1. <u>God uses war as an instrument of justice</u>

God ordained government as a means of justice on earth. God established the death penalty and government is the enforcer of that penalty. It is the government's role to take the life of those who take the life of others.

Genesis 9:6 *Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.*

Romans 13 tells us that God ordained human government for the good of its people. God authorizes government to protect its citizens and fight for them.

John the Baptist and Christ both confirmed the legitimate role of government and those who serve in the military. John the Baptist preached the need to repent of sin, and when soldiers asked him what they should do to repent, John said (paraphrase), "Don't take advantage of anyone and be satisfied with your wages." He never told them to stop being a soldier.

Christ said in ***John 18:36*** *My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.*

The Old Testament is full of examples where God told His people Israel to wage war. ***Numbers 1:3*** *From twenty years old and upward, all that are able to go forth to war in Israel: thou and Aaron shall number them by their armies.*

God told His people to enter the Promised Land and destroy all the Canaanites. ***Deuteronomy 7:1-6***

God commanded King Saul to kill the Amalekites in ***1 Samuel 15:3*** *Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not.*

2. God uses war to humble and punish His own people

God used other nations to punish Israel. In the Book of Judges we see the cycle of Israel's rebellion and disobedience and the surrounding nations that God used to attack them and bring them to repentance.

God used the Assyrians to punish His people.
Isaiah 10:5-6 *[5] O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation. [6] I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets.*

God used the Babylonians to punish His people.
Habakkuk 1:6 *For, lo, I raise up the Chaldeans (Babylonians), that bitter and hasty nation, which shall march through the breadth of the land, to possess the dwelling places that are not theirs.*

God used the Romans to punish His people.
Titus and his army destroyed Jerusalem in 70 A.D., just as Christ predicted…
Matthew 24:2 *And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.*

3. God uses war to exercise control over leaders and nations

God controls the rise and fall of leaders and the rise and fall of nations (Belshazzar in Dan. 5).

Some wars are local; some are regional; and some are world wars. The boundaries of nations are formed by wars over territory.

Acts 17:26 (God) hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.

4. <u>God uses war to teach us about spiritual warfare</u>

The Bible uses the language of warfare to illustrate the Christian life. We live on a battlefield.

Ephesians 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.
1 Timothy 1:18 ...war a good warfare
1 Timothy 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith
2 Timothy 2:3-4 [3] Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. [4] No man that wars entangles himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

We have three enemies: the world, the flesh, and the devil. It has been called "the invisible war" because our enemies are unseen, yet they are real.

1 Peter 2:11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.
1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.

We must have a battlefield mindset. Our battle song is "Onward Christian Soldiers."