

Numbers 31:1-54 **Midianites Destroyed for Seducing Israel**

God's command to destroy the Midianites

¹ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ² "Take vengeance for the children of Israel on the Midianites. Afterward you shall be gathered to your people."

Moses' Call to War against the Midianites

³ So Moses spoke to the people, saying, "Arm some of yourselves for the war, and let them go against the Midianites to take vengeance for the LORD on Midian. ⁴ A thousand from each tribe of all the tribes of Israel you shall send to the war." ⁵ So there were recruited from the divisions of Israel one thousand from each tribe, twelve thousand armed for war.

Victory over the Midianites

⁶ Then Moses sent them to the war, one thousand from each tribe; he sent them to the war with Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, with the holy articles and the signal trumpets in his hand. ⁷ And they warred against the Midianites, just as the LORD commanded Moses, and they killed all the males. ⁸ They killed the kings of Midian with the rest of those who were killed--Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, the five kings of Midian. Balaam the son of Beor they also killed with the sword. ⁹ And the children of Israel took the women of Midian captive, with their little ones, and took as spoil all their cattle, all their flocks, and all their goods. ¹⁰ They also burned with fire all the cities where they dwelt, and all their forts. ¹¹ And they took all the spoil and all the booty--of man and beast. ¹² Then they brought the captives, the booty, and the spoil to Moses, to Eleazar the priest, and to the congregation of the children of Israel, to the camp in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, across from Jericho. ¹³ And Moses, Eleazar the priest, and all the leaders of the congregation, went to meet them outside the camp.

Women who seduced the Children of Israel through the counsel of Balaam

¹⁴ But Moses was angry with the officers of the army, with the captains over thousands and captains over hundreds, who had come from the battle. ¹⁵ And Moses said to them: "Have you kept all the women alive? ¹⁶ Look, these women caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to trespass against the LORD in the incident of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD. ¹⁷ Now therefore, kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman who has known a man intimately. ¹⁸ But keep alive for yourselves all the young girls who have not known a man intimately.

Purification of the Men of War

¹⁹ And as for you, remain outside the camp seven days; whoever has killed any person, and whoever has touched any slain, purify yourselves and your captives on the third day and on the seventh day. ²⁰ Purify every garment, everything made of leather, everything woven of goats' hair, and everything made of wood."

²¹ Then Eleazar the priest said to the men of war who had gone to the battle, "This is the ordinance of the law which the LORD commanded Moses: ²² Only the gold, the silver, the bronze, the iron, the tin, and the lead, ²³ everything that can endure fire, you shall put through the fire, and it shall be clean; and it shall be purified with the water of purification. But all that cannot endure fire you shall put through water. ²⁴ And you shall wash your clothes on the seventh day and be clean, and afterward you may come into the camp."

Division of the Plunder Instructions

25 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 26 "Count up the plunder that was taken--of man and beast--you and Eleazar the priest and the chief fathers of the congregation; 27 and divide the plunder into two parts, between those who took part in the war, who went out to battle, and all the congregation. 28 And levy a tribute for the LORD on the men of war who went out to battle: one of every five hundred of the persons, the cattle, the donkeys, and the sheep; 29 take it from their half, and give it to Eleazar the priest as a heave offering to the LORD.

30 And from the children of Israel's half you shall take one of every fifty, drawn from the persons, the cattle, the donkeys, and the sheep, from all the livestock, and give them to the Levites who keep charge of the tabernacle of the LORD." 31 So Moses and Eleazar the priest did as the LORD commanded Moses.

Tally of the Plunder

For the Men of War and the Priests

32 And the booty remaining from the plunder, which the men of war had taken, was six hundred and seventy-five thousand sheep, 33 seventy-two thousand cattle, 34 sixty-one thousand donkeys, 35 and thirty-two thousand persons in all, of women who had not known a man intimately. 36 And the half, the portion for those who had gone out to war, was in number three hundred and thirty-seven thousand five hundred sheep; 37 and the LORD's tribute of the sheep was six hundred and seventy-five. 38 The cattle were thirty-six thousand, of which the LORD's tribute was seventy-two. 39 The donkeys were thirty thousand five hundred, of which the LORD's tribute was sixty-one. 40 The persons were sixteen thousand, of which the LORD's tribute was thirty-two persons. 41 So Moses gave the tribute which was the LORD's heave offering to Eleazar the priest, as the LORD commanded Moses.

For the Congregation and the Levites

42 And from the children of Israel's half, which Moses separated from the men who fought-- 43 now the half belonging to the congregation was three hundred and thirty-seven thousand five hundred sheep, 44 thirty-six thousand cattle, 45 thirty thousand five hundred donkeys, 46 and sixteen thousand persons-- 47 and from the children of Israel's half Moses took one of every fifty, drawn from man and beast, and gave them to the Levites, who kept charge of the tabernacle of the LORD, as the LORD commanded Moses.

Officers Freewill Offering

48 Then the officers who were over thousands of the army, the captains of thousands and captains of hundreds, came near to Moses; 49 and they said to Moses, "Your servants have taken a count of the men of war who are under our command, and not a man of us is missing. 50 Therefore we have brought an offering for the LORD, what every man found of ornaments of gold: armlets and bracelets and signet rings and earrings and necklaces, to make atonement for ourselves before the LORD."

Tally of the Freewill Offering

51 So Moses and Eleazar the priest received the gold from them, all the fashioned ornaments. 52 And all the gold of the offering that they offered to the LORD, from the captains of thousands and captains of hundreds, was sixteen thousand seven hundred and fifty shekels. 53 (The men of war had taken spoil, every man for himself.) 54 And Moses and Eleazar the priest received the gold from the

captains of thousands and of hundreds, and brought it into the tabernacle of meeting as a memorial for the children of Israel before the LORD. NKJV

Facts Revealed:

God's vengeance against the Midianites

- ✧ God Himself called for the destruction of the Midianites before the death of Moses. [Numbers 25:16-18, 31:1-2]
 - ◇ The reason for the call for Midian's destruction is to take God's vengeance for the Children of Israel.
 - ◇ We learn that through the counsel of Balaam the women of Midian seduced the Children of Israel to sin, which caused the death of 24,000 of the Children of Israel. [Numbers 25:1-18, 31:16]
- ✧ Moses called for the people to arm themselves for war against the Midianites to take vengeance for Yehowah on Midian.
 - ◇ Moses called for 12,000 men for the task, 1,000 from each tribe.
 - ◇ With them he sent the priest and the holy articles with the **signal trumpets**, these were the **two silver trumpets** made at the command of God. [Numbers 10:1-9, 31:6]
- ✧ God gave them the victory over the Midianites.
 - ◇ They killed all the males, the five kings of Midian (Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba), and Balaam the son of Beor, who could not curse Israel for Balak, but gave counsel to Balak to draw the Children of Israel into sin for their destruction. [Numbers 22:1 through 25:18, 31:16, Joshua 13:22, Revelation 2:14]
 - ◇ They took all the women and their little ones captive.
 - ◇ They took as spoils of war all their cattle, flocks, and goods.
 - ◇ They burned all their cities and forts with fire.
 - ◇ They brought all the captives and spoils to Moses and Eleazar the Priest at the camp in the plains of Moab by the Jordan River across from Jericho.
 - ◇ Moses, Eleazar the Priest, and all the leaders of the congregation went outside the camp to meet them on their return.

Women who seduced the Children of Israel through the counsel of Balaam

- ✧ Moses was angry with the officers of the army, and said to them:
 - ◇ Have you kept all the women alive? **These women caused the Children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to trespass against Yehowah in the incident of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of Yehowah.** [Numbers 25:1-18, 31:15-17]
 - ◇ Now therefore, kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman who has known a man intimately. But keep alive for yourselves all the young girls who have not known a man intimately.

Purification of the Men of War

- ✧ Command for Purification after war: [Numbers 31:19-24]
 - ◇ Remain outside the camp for 7 days
 - ◇ Purify any one who has killed any person or touched any slain, and the captives on the third day and on the seventh day.
 - ◇ Everything that can endure the fire must be passed through the fire; gold, silver, bronze, iron, tin, and lead.
 - ◇ Everything that can not endure the fire must be cleansed with water; garments, everything made of leather, everything woven of goats hair, everything made of wood.
 - ◇ Wash your cloths on the 7th day and be clean.
 - ◇ Afterward you may come into the camp.

Division of the Plunder (instructions)

- ✧ Moses, Eleazar the Priest, and the Chief Fathers of the Congregation are to divide the plunder into two parts, one part for those who took part in the war, the other for the Congregation. The plunder to be divided included both man and beast.

Those who took part in the war;

- ✧ Give as tribute to Yehowah, 1 of every 500 of the persons, of the cattle, the donkeys, and the sheep.
- ✧ They are given to Eleazar the Priest as a Heave Offering to Yehowah.

The Congregation of the Children of Israel;

- ✧ Give 1 of every 50 of the persons, cattle, donkeys, sheep, and livestock to the Levites who keep charge of the Tabernacle of Yehowah

The Plunder that remained after the purge:

Sheep	675,000
Cattle	72,000
Donkeys	61,000
Virgin Women	32,000

Portion for the men of war:

Sheep	337,500
Cattle	36,000
Donkeys	30,500
Virgin Women	16,000

Yehowah's tribute for the Priests from the Men of War:

Sheep	675
Cattle	72
Donkeys	61
Virgin Women	32

Portion for the Congregation:

Sheep	337,500
Cattle	36,000
Donkeys	30,500
Virgin Women	16,000

Portion for the Levites from the Congregation:

Sheep	6,750
Cattle	720
Donkeys	610
Virgin Women	320

- ✧ **Army officers had not lost a single man in the war,**
Therefore they gave an offering from the spoils to Yehowah of:
 - ✧ Ornaments of gold, Armlets, Bracelets, Signet rings, Earrings, Necklaces
 - ✧ To make atonement for themselves before Yehowah.

The gold given by the officers amounted to 16,750 shekels

✧ Moses and Eleazar the Priest received the gold and brought it into the Tabernacle of Meeting as a memorial for the Children of Israel before Yehowah.