

210428-4 Nu 31, Avenging the Midianites & Distributing the Spoils—CThurman

1 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
2 Avenge *the children of Israel of the Midianites:*
 thou

avenge, נָקַם נִקְמַת, Qal imper. sing. masc. of the verb נָקַם, nah-qam, tss. *to avenge, to take vengeance, to revenge, to punish*; the noun נָקָם, nah-qahm is tss. *a quarrel, a vengeance, an avenged*; the fem. noun נִקְמָה, n'-kah-mah, *avenge, vengeance, the revenging, our revenge, to settle a quarrel [Lev.26.26]*; both the Qal imper. and the fem. noun are here in the English word *avenge*.

The time has come that the LORD directs Moses to repay the Midianites for what they did to them in the matter of Baal-Peor.

Nu.25.16 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
17 Vex (trouble, afflict, oppress) the Midianites, and smite them:

vex, the verb צָרַר, tss. *to vex, to distress, to be in a strait, to trouble, to bind, to afflict, to make narrow, to be an adversary, to oppress, to become an enemy, to besiege, to cause pangs (of childbirth).*

18 For they vex you with their wiles (deceit), wherewith they have beguiled (deceived) you in the matter of Peor,

with their wiles, בְּנִכְלֵיהֶם, b^e-nik-leyh-hem, a masc. pl. of the noun נִכְל, neh-kel, only this once in the OT, but see the verb form here.

they have beguiled, נִכְלוּ, nik-loo, a verb in Piel (intensive act.) pret. of נִכַּל, tss. *to be a deceiver, to beguile, to be subtil, to conspire.*

and in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of a prince of Midian, their sister, which was slain in the day of the plague for Peor's sake.

Vengeance, retribution, repaying others for the evil that they have done has always been the LORD's to do.

Ge.4.11 [The LORD speaking.] And now art thou [Cain] cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand;

12 When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

13 ¶ And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear.

14 Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.

15 And the LORD said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.

First, both the Old and New Testaments show that the LORD repays His children for rebelling against Him.

De 32:5 They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of his children (this is not what should be of the children of God): they are a perverse and crooked generation.

6 Do ye thus requite the LORD, O foolish people and unwise? is not he thy father that hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?

...

35 To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time:

shall slide, Qal fut. of the verb מוּחַ, mōht, tss. to remove, to shake, to move, to slip, to fall in decay, to fall down.

for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste (or, that which is prepared for them make haste).

the things that shall come, fem. pl. adj. עֲתִידָהּ, [g]a-teed, tss. the things that shall come, a ready (to the battle), the sense of 'that which is prepared'.

make haste, Qal pret. of the verb חוּשׁוּ, choosh, tss. to make haste, to hasten, to be ready.

He.10.28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:

29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

30 For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.

31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

So yes, judgment begins with the house of God.

1Pe 4:17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

There is a time when the LORD has determined to judge an unbelieving world. This is last in the order of things. First, the children of God, then the world.

Ps 94:1 O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thyself.

Ro.12:19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

2Th.1.6 Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you;

7 And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,

8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.

The only reason the LORD He hasn't executed vengeance is because He is longsuffering to usward, that is, His election of grace, that none of these perish.

2Pe.3.7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

8 ¶ But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

9 ¶ The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Evidently some of us have not come to repentance, therefore the Lord is longsuffering ... μακροθυμέω, μακρός long, far +

θυμός wrath; also tss. *patient, having long patience, bearing long, suffering long.*

10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

...

15 And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation ...

When the LORD pours out His wrath it is thorough and final. (Sodom & Gomorrah, Jude 7 *Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire; the threat against Nineveh; the earth has an appointed day when the LORD will pour out his wrath. (Re.16.1)*

afterward shalt thou be gathered unto thy people.

shalt thou be gathered unto they people – refers to dying. Such was said to Abraham (cf. Ge.25.8), to Ishmael (Ge.25.17), Isaac (cf. Ge.35.29), Jacob (cf. Ge.49.33), Aaron, (Nu.20.24; 27.13), Moses (cf. Nu.27.13; 31.2; Deu.32.50), to the passing of a whole generation of Israel (cf. Jud.2.10), and of king Josiah (cf. 2Ki.22.20; 2Chron.34.28).

Ge 25:8 Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years; and was gathered to his people.

The day of Moses' death is nearing. The LORD said earlier in Nu.27 that he would die *when* he ascended the mountain range of Abarim to view the land of Canaan.

Nu 27:12 And the LORD said unto Moses, Get thee up into this mount Abarim, and see the land which I have given unto the children of Israel.

13 And when thou hast seen it, thou also shalt be gathered unto thy people, as Aaron thy brother was gathered. (cf. Deu.32.50)

The LORD had appointed a particular place and time for Moses' death. He would die upon the mount Nebo, on a point called Pisgah.

De 32:49 Get thee up into this mountain Abarim, unto mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, that is over against Jericho; and behold the land of Canaan, which I give unto the children of Israel for a possession ...

De 34:1 And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho ...

Pisgah, הַפִּסְגָּה, lit. 'the Pisgah', which Hebrew verb root is גִּפַּס, only once in the OT, Ps.48.13.

Ps 48:13 Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following.

Benjamin Davis defines as 'to divide, hence to distinguish, view or consider'; so the LXX, has *observe*, for the Gr. καταδιαιρέειν, which is the same, to divide or differentiate the various palaces.

3 And Moses spake unto the people, saying, Arm some of yourselves unto the war,

arm yourselves, הִחַלְצוּ, hey-chal-tzoo, Niphal (simple pass.) imper. masc. of חָלַץ, cha-latz, tss. to loose, to draw out, to withdraw, to put off, to arm, to be ready armed, to arm men, to arm soldiers, to deliver, to take away.

war, לְצָבָא, ל, for לְהָ, unto the, and אֶבְיָא, tzah-vah, a masc. noun, tss. host, army, war, service (marg. the warfare), battle, warfare; vss. 3-6 (v.6 twice), 14, 21, 27,28, 32, 36, 53 (13 times in this chapter), tss. battle, war and host.

In vengeance the LORD does use means. Here to avenge Himself of the Midianites He will use the means of the Israelites. Then it is proper for them to act so against their enemies, the enemies of the LORD. The same can be said of the vengeance which Christ shall execute upon all of the unbelieving inhabitants of the earth in the day of His coming. Not only does he pour our vials of His wrath upon the earth, but when this is all done Jesus Christ shall come with His saints to complete that vengeance.

Jude 14 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these [filthy dreamers], saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,

15 ¶ To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

and let them go against the Midianites, and avenge the LORD of Midian.
be

The LORD would avenge his people of Midian, for what Balak, king of Moab sent to Midian and formed a confederacy with Midian against Israel. Together they hire the false prophet Balaam in an attempt to curse Israel.

Nu 22:4 And Moab said unto the elders of Midian, Now shall this company lick up all that are round about us, as the ox licketh up the grass of the field. And Balak the son of Zippor was king of the Moabites at that time.

...

7 And the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian departed with the rewards of divination in their hand; and they came unto Balaam, and spake unto him the words of Balak.

Though Balak could not obtain through Balaam the desired curse upon Israel he did contrive a scheme to corrupt them. If they could cause Israel to offend their God then they might succeed in defeating them. So, the Midianites set out to corrupt the Israelites. (cf. Nu.25.15) Israel fell into whoredom/fornication, and for this the LORD judged them. 24,000

Israelites died as a result of God's judging this sin in them. (cf. Nu.25.9) But for this the LORD commanded Moses to vex the Midianites.

Nu 25:17 Vex the Midianites, and smite them:

18 For they vex you with their wives, wherewith they have beguiled you in the matter of Peor, and in the matter of Cozbi, the daughter of a prince of Midian, their sister, which was slain in the day of the plague for Peor's sake.

This is clearly stated in Nu.31.16.

Nu.31.16 Behold, these caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD.

4 Of every tribe a thousand, throughout all the tribes of Israel, shall ye send to the war.

5 So there were delivered out of the thousands of Israel, a thousand of every tribe, twelve thousand armed for war.

As you might recalled these armed men are of those tribes that are encamped afar off from the tabernacle. These do not include any of the tribe of Levi. These are the men that were numbered in the latest census. These are the men that were counted in the latest census (cf. Nu. ch.26) whose ages range from 20 years of age and upward and able for war. (cf. Nu.26.51) This armed force numbered 601,730. So, taking 1,000 from these tribes and this number was the equivalent of taking 1/50th of their armed force.

6 And Moses sent them to the war, a thousand of every tribe, them and Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, to the war, with the holy instruments, and the trumpets to blow in his hand.

instruments, masc. noun יְבִלִים, k'-lee, tss. jewels, stuff, vessels, furniture, instruments, weapons (Ge.27.3, to Esau, besides his bow and quiver, he was to take his weapons [instruments for hunting]).

Remember, Eleazar is now high priest, being appointed of the LORD to take the place of his father Aaron when he died at Hor. (Nu.20.27, 28)

Now about the trumpets, this is a reference to the two silver trumpets of Nu.10. *[T]he sons of Aaron, the priests, shall blow with the trumpets.* (cf. Nu.10.8) So I take this to mean that Phinehas has others of his brethren that are ministering with him at this time. It appears that the alarm sounded by either of these trumpets would let each tribe to know when they should advance. (cf. Nu.10.5, 6) At the sound the LORD would remember them and save them from their enemies. (Nu.10.9)

7 ¶ *And they warred against the Midianites, as the LORD commanded Moses; and they slew all the males.*

8 *And they slew the kings of Midian, beside the rest of them that were slain; namely, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, five kings of Midian: Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword.*

they slew all the males – must mean that they slew all the males that they fought against. The people do not appear to be eradicated, but later subdued. (cf. Jud. chs. 6-8 the final subduing of the Midianites.)

Jos.13.21 And all the cities of the plain, and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, which reigned in Heshbon, whom Moses smote with the princes of Midian, Evi, and Rekem, and Zur, and Hur, and Reba, which were dukes of Sihon, dwelling in the country.

22 Balaam also the son of Beor, the soothsayer, did the children of Israel slay with the sword among them that were slain by them.

9 *And the children of Israel took all the women of Midian captives, and their little ones, and took the spoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods.*

10 *And they burnt all their cities wherein they dwelt, and all their goodly*

castles, with fire.
habitations or residences

burnt, שָׂרְפוּ, sar-phoo, 3ppl. Qal pret. of the verb שָׂרַף, tss. *to burn, to kindle*.

goodly castles, כָּל־טִירָתָם, כָּל, *all*, טִירָתָם, tee-rō-tham, fem. pl. noun w/3ppl. masc. suffix; the sing. noun is טִירָה, tee-rah', tss. *castle* (Gen.25.16; 1Chr.6.54), *goodly castle* (Nu.31.10), *habitation* (Ps.69.25), *palace* (Song of Solomon [Cant.] 8.9; Ez.25.4), *rows* (Ez.46.23).

LXX has the Gr. κατοικία, at Nu.31.10, *habitation*; 1Chr.6.54, *residences*.

The phrase *goodly castles* tells how well the Midianites were situated in the land.

11 And they took all the spoil, and all the prey, both of men and of beasts.

the spoil, masc. noun, שָׁלַל, sha-lal, tss. *the spoil, the prey*; the verb שָׁלַל, tss. *make a spoil, to be a purpose, to take, to let fall, to make a prey*.

all the prey, כָּל־הַמְּלָקוֹחַ, כָּל, *all*, הַ, *the*, מְלָקוֹחַ, mal-qōach, tss. *a prey, the booty, my jaws*; **vss. 11, 12, 26, 27, 32.**

They took the spoil of captives and the prey of beasts.

12 And they brought the captives, **and the prey,**
the women and the children the beasts

and the spoil, **unto Moses, and Eleazar the priest,**
the Amalekites former possessions

and unto the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the camp at the plains of Moab, which are by Jordan near Jericho.

13 ¶ And Moses, and Eleazar the priest, and all the princes of the congregation,

princes, masc. noun נְשִׂיאַי, nah-see', tss. a prince, a ruler, a captain, a chief, a governor.

The princes of the congregation being of those that were not appointed to go to this battle.

went forth to meet them without the camp.

**14 And Moses was wroth with the officers of the host,
musterers**

the officers is the tss. of the verb פָּקַד, tss. to charge, to visit, to number, to punish, to appoint, to remember, to muster (a very broad interpretation.

with the captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, which came from the battle.

captains, the masc. noun שָׂר, sar, tss. captain, prince, chief, keeper, ruler.

15 And Moses said unto them, Have ye saved all the women alive?

This is a complaint that Moses raises which in affect says, 'What are have you done in saving the women alive?

**16 Behold, these caused the children of Israel,
[are the women that]**

through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor,

Yes, it is true, that no one can cause us to do anything that we do not want to do, and the Lord judged Israel for their sin in this matter. But this does not relieve them that provide the means for sin.

Hab 2:15 Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and maketh him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!

These women were the instruments used of Midian to corrupt Israel in order to bring them into disfavor with the LORD.

and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD.

Through their deeds the LORD brought a plague upon you for sinning against the LORD. In this 23,000 thousand Israelites died in one day and 24,000 total. (cf. Nu.25.9; 1Co.10.8)

17 Now therefore kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him.

Every male child and every female not a virgin was to be slain. This is the harsh reality of war; perhaps the kind of war with which we are unfamiliar. War usually bring death, destruction, disease, and famine.

Re 6:8 And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

The Bible does not dress up the truth to make it palatable.

Remember the context. 24,000 souls of Israel died because of Midian's attempt to mislead Israel. This is the record of Scriptures.

Vss.18-24, Purification for Sin

In the following, is a record of the application of the *water of separation* or *purification for sin*. The LORD commanded Moses and Aaron to make this kind of water in Nu.19. It was to be applied to the Israelites in instances where they became defiled because of death. They became defiled like this when they came into the house of one that had been discovered dead

there. Then this water was sprinkled on all the vessels and the tent. If any ever touched a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave then the water was applied. (cf. Nu.19.18) In the case of the Israelites contracted uncleanness for *touching* the slain. So, they needed the *water of separation* or *purification for sin* applied. It was not an act of sin for Israel to obey the commandment of the LORD to kill their enemies in warfare any more than it is not an act of sin for our military personal, our police force, and our own personal acts of self-defense to cause one's death. OT Israel contracted an external pollution or filth in the process of war that needed cleansing.

1Co.5.9 ¶ I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators:

10 Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.

There is an incidental pollution that we contract for being in the world. It is not that we are sinless ourselves, but as we live among those who are without Christ, who live sometimes wicked, profane and abominable lives. Daily being exposed to this, I think we become incidentally affected; we contract to us a filthiness from which we need to be cleansed. The child of God will have a sense of this if he is not in a spiritual slumber.

The Israelites were not acting out of malice and hate. That is not war. War is not a personal vendetta. Undoubtedly war has likely been the result of wicked leaders settling a personal vendetta against another, but those that fought in these wars were only doing as they were commanded.

Ro 12:19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

The Amalekites became the enemies of the LORD because of what they did to the LORD's people.

18 But all the women children, that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves.

In other words all the undefiled daughters may be spared; perhaps as maidservants or for wives (Deu.21.10-14, taking a captive for a wife).

19 And do ye abide without the camp seven days: Who? whosoever hath killed any person, and whosoever hath touched any slain, purify both yourselves and your captives

To touch the body of the dead, whether human or animal brings defilement. (cf. Nu.5.2; 12.11)

*Nu.5.1 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,
2 Command the children of Israel, that they put out of the camp every leper, and every one that hath an issue, and whosoever is defiled by the dead:
3 Both male and female shall ye put out, without the camp shall ye put them; that they defile not their camps, in the midst whereof I dwell.
4 And the children of Israel did so, and put them out without the camp: as the LORD spake unto Moses, so did the children of Israel.*

Nu.19.11 ¶ He that toucheth the dead body of any man shall be unclean seven days.

...

13 Whosoever toucheth the dead body of any man that is dead, and purifieth not himself, defileth the tabernacle of the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from Israel: because the water of separation was not sprinkled upon him, he shall be unclean; his uncleanness is yet upon him.

...

16 And whosoever toucheth one that is slain with a sword in the open fields, or a dead body, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days.

...

20 But the man that shall be unclean, and shall not purify himself, that soul shall be cut off from among the congregation, because he hath defiled the sanctuary of the LORD: the water of separation hath not been sprinkled upon him; he is unclean.

on the third day, and on the seventh day.

Nu.19.12 He shall purify himself with it on the third day, and on the seventh day he shall be clean: but if he purify not himself the third day, then the seventh day he shall not be clean.

20 And purify all your raiment, and all that is made of skins, and all work of goats' hair, and all things made of wood.

Nu.19.18 And a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water, and sprinkle it upon the tent, and upon all the vessels, and upon the persons that were there, and upon him that touched a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave ...

21 And Eleazar the priest said unto the men of war which went to the battle, This is the ordinance of the law which the LORD commanded Moses;

22 Only the gold, and the silver, the brass, the iron, the tin, and the lead,

23 Every thing that may abide the fire, ye shall make it go through the fire, and it shall be clean: nevertheless it shall be purified with the water of separation: and all that abideth not the fire ye shall make go through the water.

24 And ye shall wash your clothes on the seventh day, and ye shall be clean, and afterward ye shall come into the camp.

At the very least everything must have the purification water applied to it, but all the metals are also to go through the fire.

Dividing the Spoil among the Nation

25 ¶ And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

26 Take the sum of the prey that was taken, both of man and of beast, thou, and Eleazar the priest, and the chief fathers of the congregation:

קָיָאָר, Qal imper. pl. masc. of נָשָׂא; the imperative [1.2, **take ye**; 3.40, **and take**; 11.12, **carry them**; 26.2, **take**; 31.26, **take**] is tss. *to lift up, take, forgive, carry, bring, suffer, set up, bear*

27 And divide the prey into two parts; between them that took the war upon them, who went out to battle, and between all the congregation:

Obviously, them that went to war received a greater portion than the part for the congregation because the number of warriors was less than the number of the congregation. For example, just considering the number of warriors in the nation, there were 601,730 men. Less the 12,000 men that went to war, the spoils, in an example like this would be split in two. 589,730 would receive one part, and 12,000 would receive the other.

The Warrior's Levy

28 And levy a tribute unto the LORD of the men of war
heave number

levy, נִהַרְמַתָּ, Hiphil (causative act.) pret. 2ps. masc. of the verb נִרְם, room, tss. *to lift up, to exalt, to be high, to be lofty, to mount up, to set up, to offer up, to heave, to promote, to levy.*

tribute, מִכָּס, meh-kes, a masc. noun, always tss. *tribute* (6); the fem. noun מִכְסָה, mik-sah, is only twice in the OT and tss. *the number, the worth*; and the verb כָּסַס, ka-sas, is only once, and tss. *to make your count.*

which went out to battle:

one soul of five hundred, both of the persons, and of the beeves, and of the asses, and of the sheep:

29 Take it of their half, and give it unto Eleazar the priest, for an heave offering of the LORD.

The warrior's levy was given to the LORD, as I understand, to the Aaronic priesthood.

30 And of the children of Israel's half, thou shalt take one portion of fifty, of the persons, of the beeves, of the asses, and of the flocks, of all manner of beasts, and give them unto the Levites, which keep the charge of the tabernacle of the LORD.

The congregation's levy was one for every 50 persons and animals they received. This levy was given to the Levitical tribes, Kohath, Gershon and Merari.

31 And Moses and Eleazar the priest did as the LORD commanded Moses.

32 And the booty, being the rest of the prey which the men of war had caught, was six hundred thousand and seventy thousand and five thousand sheep,

33 And threescore and twelve thousand beeves,

34 And threescore and one thousand asses,

35 And thirty and two thousand persons in all, of women that had not known man by lying with him.

36 And the half, which was the portion of them that went out to war, was in number three hundred thousand and seven and thirty thousand and five hundred sheep:

37 And the LORD'S tribute of the sheep was six hundred and threescore and fifteen.

38 And the beeves were thirty and six thousand; of which the LORD'S tribute was threescore and twelve.

39 And the asses were thirty thousand and five hundred; of which the LORD'S tribute was threescore and one.

40 And the persons were sixteen thousand; of which the LORD'S tribute was thirty and two persons.

41 And Moses gave the tribute, which was the LORD'S heave offering, unto Eleazar the priest, as the LORD commanded Moses.

42 And of the children of Israel's half, which Moses divided from the men that warred,

43 (Now the half that pertained unto the congregation was three hundred thousand and thirty thousand and seven thousand and five hundred sheep,

44 And thirty and six thousand beeves,

45 And thirty thousand asses and five hundred,

46 And sixteen thousand persons;)

47 Even of the children of Israel's half, Moses took one portion of fifty, both of man and of beast, and gave them unto the Levites, which kept the charge of the tabernacle of the LORD; as the LORD commanded Moses.

Spoils	Total #	Soldier's Pt.	The LORD's Part		
			The Aaronic Priesthood's Part	Congregation's Pt.	Levite's Part
Sheep	675,000	337,500	675	337,500	6,750
Beeves	72,000	36,000	72	36,000	720
Asses	61,000	30,500	61	30,500	610
daughters	32,000	16,000	32	16,000	320

In effect the Levites received the equivalent of a tithe of all the spoils, and the Aaronic priesthood a tithe of the Levites portion. To say it another way, the LORD gave to the Levites 1/10th of the total sum of the spoils, and to the Aaronic priesthood 1/10th of the sum of that which the Levites received.

48 ¶ And the officers which were over thousands of the host, the captains of thousands, and captains of hundreds, came near unto Moses:

49 And they said unto Moses, Thy servants have taken the sum of the men of war which are under our charge, and there lacketh not one man of us.

All of the captains evidently took a roll call of their troops. At this they came to realize that among them, not a man of the 12,000 men that went out to war against the Amalekites had died in battle. And for this they were moved to give an offering of thanksgiving, a peace offering to the LORD. This was an offering that is voluntary. It is a freewill offering. It is an offering that leaves the amount of that which is offered to the discretion of the offerer. It is not so much the amount of the gift, but the manner in which the gift is offered.

50 We have therefore brought an oblation for the LORD, what every man hath gotten, of jewels of gold, chains, and bracelets, rings, earrings, and tablets, to make an atonement for our souls before the LORD.

[of the congregation]

to make an atonement for our souls before the Lord – appears to be a reference to Ex.30.11-16. Then the LORD commanded Israel that each warrior pay ½ shekel each as a ransom for their souls so that there be no

plague among them when they are numbered. This ransom was given into the treasury to support the service of the tabernacle. It is my opinion that the ransom money which these officers gave was for the same purpose; to support the service of the tabernacle. The ransom these warriors contributed the ½ shekel fee in Ex. 30 almost 3 times. In comparison to that it is a generous ransom. Again, I think this is the heart's expression of gratitude for the LORD saving them in the battle. They voluntarily paid a ransom shekel for their lives because the LORD ransomed their lives from death on the battlefield.

51 And Moses and Eleazar the priest took the gold of them, even all wrought jewels.

52 And all the gold of the offering that they offered up to the LORD, of the captains of thousands, and of the captains of hundreds, was sixteen thousand seven hundred and fifty shekels.

53 (For the men of war had taken spoil, every man for himself.)

54 And Moses and Eleazar the priest took the gold of the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and brought it into the tabernacle of the congregation, for a memorial for the children of Israel before the LORD.

These were all dedicated to the LORD. It was a memorial of the great victory that the LORD gave to the children of Israel.