

Yahweh's War of Vengeance Against Midian is Carried Out (September–December 1407 BC)

Numbers 31

The War of Vengeance Against Midian is Carried Out (initiated in Num 25:17)

- 1 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,
 2 "Take full vengeance for the sons of Israel on the Midianites; afterward you will be gathered to your people."
 3 Moses spoke to the people, saying, "Arm men from among you for the war, that they may go against Midian to execute the LORD's vengeance on Midian.
 4 A thousand from each tribe of all the tribes of Israel you shall send to the war."
 5 So there were furnished from the thousands of Israel, a thousand from each tribe, twelve thousand armed for war.
 6 Moses sent them, a thousand from each tribe, to the war, and Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, to the war with them, and the holy vessels and the trumpets for the alarm in his hand.
 7 So they made war against Midian, just as the LORD had commanded Moses, and they killed every male.
 8 They killed the kings of Midian along with the *rest* of their slain: Evi and Rekem and Zur and Hur and Reba, the five kings of Midian; they also killed Balaam the son of Beor with the sword.

The Spoils of War

- 9 The sons of Israel captured the women of Midian and their little ones; and all their cattle and all their flocks and all their goods they plundered.
 10 Then they burned all their cities where they lived and all their camps with fire.
 11 They took all the spoil and all the prey, both of man and of beast.
 12 They brought the captives and the prey and the spoil to Moses, and to Eleazar the priest and to the congregation of the sons of Israel, to the camp at the plains of Moab, which are by the Jordan *opposite* Jericho.

Moses Orders All Male Children and Sexually Active Women to be Killed

- 13 Moses and Eleazar the priest and all the leaders of the congregation went out to meet them outside the camp.
 14 Moses was angry with the officers of the army, the captains of thousands and the captains of hundreds, who had come from service in the war.
 15 And Moses said to them, "Have you spared all the women?
 16 Behold, these caused the sons of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, so the plague was among the congregation of the LORD.
 17 Now therefore, kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman who has known man intimately.
 18 But all the girls who have not known man intimately, spare for yourselves.

Purification After War

- 19 And you, camp outside the camp seven days; whoever has killed any person and whoever has touched any slain, purify yourselves, you and your captives, on the third day and on the seventh day.
 20 You shall purify for yourselves every garment and every article of leather and all the work of goats' *hair*, and all articles of wood."
 21 Then Eleazar the priest said to the men of war who had gone to battle, "This is the statute of the law which the LORD has commanded Moses:
 22 only the gold and the silver, the bronze, the iron, the tin and the lead,
 23 everything that can stand the fire, you shall pass through the fire, and it shall be clean, but it shall be purified with water for impurity. But whatever cannot stand the fire you shall pass through the water.
 24 And you shall wash your clothes on the seventh day and be clean, and afterward you may enter the camp."

Plunder Divided Equally Between the Warriors and the Congregation

Priests Received 1/500th of Warrior's Share, Levites Received 1/50th of Congregation's Share

- 25 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,
 26 "You and Eleazar the priest and the heads of the fathers' *households* of the congregation take a count of the booty that was captured, both of man and of animal;
 27 and divide the booty between the warriors who went out to battle and all the congregation.
 28 Levy a tax for the LORD from the men of war who went out to battle, one in five hundred of the persons and of the cattle and of the donkeys and of the sheep;
 29 take it from their half and give it to Eleazar the priest, as an offering to the LORD.
 30 From the sons of Israel's half, you shall take one drawn out of every fifty of the persons, of the cattle, of the donkeys and of the sheep, from all the animals, and give them to the Levites who keep charge of the tabernacle of the LORD."
 31 Moses and Eleazar the priest did just as the LORD had commanded Moses.
 32 Now the booty that remained from the spoil which the men of war had plundered was 675,000 sheep,
 33 and 72,000 cattle,

34 and 61,000 donkeys,
 35 and of human beings, of the women who had not known man intimately, all the persons were 32,000.
 36 The half, the portion of those who went out to war, was *as follows*: the number of sheep was 337,500,
 37 and the LORD's levy of the sheep was 675;
 38 and the cattle were 36,000, from which the LORD's levy was 72;
 39 and the donkeys were 30,500, from which the LORD's levy was 61;
 40 and the human beings were 16,000, from whom the LORD's levy was 32 persons.
 41 Moses gave the levy *which was* the LORD's offering to Eleazar the priest, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.
 42 As for the sons of Israel's half, which Moses separated from the men who had gone to war—
 43 now the congregation's half was 337,500 sheep,
 44 and 36,000 cattle,
 45 and 30,500 donkeys,
 46 and the human beings were 16,000—
 47 and from the sons of Israel's half, Moses took one drawn out of every fifty, both of man and of animals, and gave them to the Levites, who kept charge of the tabernacle of the LORD, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

Army Commanders Bring a Special Offering of Gratitude for No Casualties

48 Then the officers who were over the thousands of the army, the captains of thousands and the captains of hundreds, approached Moses,
 49 and they said to Moses, "Your servants have taken a census of men of war who are in our charge, and no man of us is missing.
 50 So we have brought as an offering to the LORD what each man found, articles of gold, armlets and bracelets, signet rings, earrings and necklaces, to make atonement for ourselves before the LORD."
 51 Moses and Eleazar the priest took the gold from them, all kinds of wrought articles.
 52 All the gold of the offering which they offered up to the LORD, from the captains of thousands and the captains of hundreds, was 16,750 shekels.
 53 The men of war had taken booty, every man for himself.
 54 So Moses and Eleazar the priest took the gold from the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and brought it to the tent of meeting as a memorial for the sons of Israel before the LORD.

Reuben and Gad Settle on the East Side of Jordan (September–December 1407 BC)

Numbers 32

Reuben and Gad Ask to Stay on the East Side of Jordan

1 Now the sons of Reuben and the sons of Gad had an exceedingly large number of livestock. So when they saw the land of Jazer and the land of Gilead, that it was indeed a place suitable for livestock,
 2 the sons of Gad and the sons of Reuben came and spoke to Moses and to Eleazar the priest and to the leaders of the congregation, saying,
 3 "Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo and Beon,
 4 the land which the LORD conquered before the congregation of Israel, is a land for livestock, and your servants have livestock."
 5 They said, "If we have found favor in your sight, let this land be given to your servants as a possession; do not take us across the Jordan."

Moses Misunderstands Their Intentions

6 But Moses said to the sons of Gad and to the sons of Reuben, "Shall your brothers go to war while you yourselves sit here?
 7 Now why are you discouraging the sons of Israel from crossing over into the land which the LORD has given them?
 8 This is what your fathers did when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to see the land.
 9 For when they went up to the valley of Eshcol and saw the land, they discouraged the sons of Israel so that they did not go into the land which the LORD had given them.
 10 So the LORD's anger burned in that day, and He swore, saying,
 11 'None of the men who came up from Egypt, from twenty years old and upward, shall see the land which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob; for they did not follow Me fully,
 12 except Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite and Joshua the son of Nun, for they have followed the LORD fully.'
 13 So the LORD's anger burned against Israel, and He made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until the entire generation of those who had done evil in the sight of the LORD was destroyed.
 14 Now behold, you have risen up in your fathers' place, a brood of sinful men, to add still more to the burning anger of the LORD against Israel.
 15 For if you turn away from following Him, He will once more abandon them in the wilderness, and you will destroy all these people."

The Two Tribes Explain

16 Then they came near to him and said, “We will build here sheepfolds for our livestock and cities for our little ones;
 17 but we ourselves will be armed ready *to go* before the sons of Israel, until we have brought them to their place, while our little ones live in the fortified cities because of the inhabitants of the land.
 18 We will not return to our homes until every one of the sons of Israel has possessed his inheritance.
 19 For we will not have an inheritance with them on the other side of the Jordan and beyond, because our inheritance has fallen to us on this side of the Jordan toward the east.”

Moses Agrees to their Request

20 So Moses said to them, “If you will do this, if you will arm yourselves before the LORD for the war,
 21 and all of you armed men cross over the Jordan before the LORD until He has driven His enemies out from before Him,
 22 and the land is subdued before the LORD, then afterward you shall return and be free of obligation toward the LORD and toward Israel, and this land shall be yours for a possession before the LORD.
 23 But if you will not do so, behold, you have sinned against the LORD, and be sure your sin will find you out.
 24 Build yourselves cities for your little ones, and sheepfolds for your sheep, and do what you have promised.”
 25 The sons of Gad and the sons of Reuben spoke to Moses, saying, “Your servants will do just as my lord commands.
 26 Our little ones, our wives, our livestock and all our cattle shall remain there in the cities of Gilead;
 27 while your servants, everyone who is armed for war, will cross over in the presence of the LORD to battle, just as my lord says.”

The Agreement is Witnessed Before the Leaders

28 So Moses gave command concerning them to Eleazar the priest, and to Joshua the son of Nun, and to the heads of the fathers’ households of the tribes of the sons of Israel.
 29 Moses said to them, “If the sons of Gad and the sons of Reuben, everyone who is armed for battle, will cross with you over the Jordan in the presence of the LORD, and the land is subdued before you, then you shall give them the land of Gilead for a possession;
 30 but if they will not cross over with you armed, they shall have possessions among you in the land of Canaan.”
 31 The sons of Gad and the sons of Reuben answered, saying, “As the LORD has said to your servants, so we will do.
 32 We ourselves will cross over armed in the presence of the LORD into the land of Canaan, and the possession of our inheritance shall remain with us across the Jordan.”

Moses Divides the Land (Half-tribe of Manasseh Joins Reuben and Gad)

33 So Moses gave to them, to the sons of Gad and to the sons of Reuben and to the half-tribe of Joseph’s son Manasseh, the kingdom of Sihon, king of the Amorites and the kingdom of Og, the king of Bashan, the land with its cities with *their* territories, the cities of the surrounding land.
 34 The sons of Gad built Dibon and Ataroth and Aroer,
 35 and Atroth-shophan and Jazer and Jogbehah,
 36 and Beth-nimrah and Beth-haran as fortified cities, and sheepfolds for sheep.
 37 The sons of Reuben built Heshbon and Elealeh and Kiriathaim,
 38 and Nebo and Baal-meon—*their* names being changed—and Sibmah, and they gave *other* names to the cities which they built.
 39 The sons of Machir the son of Manasseh went to Gilead and took it, and dispossessed the Amorites who were in it.
 40 So Moses gave Gilead to Machir the son of Manasseh, and he lived in it.
 41 Jair the son of Manasseh went and took its towns, and called them Havvoth-jair.
 42 Nobah went and took Kenath and its villages, and called it Nobah after his own name.

The Inheritance of Reuben, Gad and East Manasseh (September–December 1407 BC)

Joshua 13:8–12, 14–33

General Survey of the Inheritance—Levi Excluded

8 With the other half-tribe, the Reubenites and the Gadites received their inheritance which Moses gave them beyond the Jordan to the east, just as Moses the servant of the LORD gave to them;
 9 from Aroer, which is on the edge of the valley of the Arnon, with the city which is in the middle of the valley, and all the plain of Medeba, as far as Dibon;
 10 and all the cities of Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, as far as the border of the sons of Ammon;
 11 and Gilead, and the territory of the Geshurites and Maacathites, and all Mount Hermon, and all Bashan as far as Salecah;
 12 all the kingdom of Og in Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth and in Edrei (he alone was left of the remnant of the Rephaim); for Moses struck them and dispossessed them.
 14 Only to the tribe of Levi he did not give an inheritance; the offerings by fire to the LORD, the God of Israel, are their inheritance, as He spoke to him.

Reuben's Inheritance

15 So Moses gave *an inheritance* to the tribe of the sons of Reuben according to their families.

16 Their territory was from Aroer, which is on the edge of the valley of the Arnon, with the city which is in the middle of the valley and all the plain by Medeba;

17 Heshbon, and all its cities which are on the plain: Dibon and Bamoth-baal and Beth-baal-meon,

18 and Jahaz and Kedemoth and Mephaath,

19 and Kiriathaim and Sibmah and Zereth-shahar on the hill of the valley,

20 and Beth-peor and the slopes of Pisgah and Beth-jeshimoth,

21 even all the cities of the plain and all the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites who reigned in Heshbon, whom Moses struck with the chiefs of Midian, Evi and Rekem and Zur and Hur and Reba, the princes of Sihon, who lived in the land.

22 The sons of Israel also killed Balaam the son of Beor, the diviner, with the sword among *the rest* of their slain.

23 The border of the sons of Reuben was the Jordan. This was the inheritance of the sons of Reuben according to their families, the cities and their villages.

Gad's Inheritance

24 Moses also gave *an inheritance* to the tribe of Gad, to the sons of Gad, according to their families.

25 Their territory was Jazer, and all the cities of Gilead, and half the land of the sons of Ammon, as far as Aroer which is before Rabbah;

26 and from Heshbon as far as Ramath-mizpeh and Betonim, and from Mahanaim as far as the border of Debir;

27 and in the valley, Beth-haram and Beth-nimrah and Succoth and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of Sihon king of Heshbon, with the Jordan as a border, as far as the *lower* end of the Sea of Chinnereth beyond the Jordan to the east.

28 This is the inheritance of the sons of Gad according to their families, the cities and their villages.

East Manasseh's Inheritance

29 Moses also gave *an inheritance* to the half-tribe of Manasseh; and it was for the half-tribe of the sons of Manasseh according to their families.

30 Their territory was from Mahanaim, all Bashan, all the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, and all the towns of Jair, which are in Bashan, sixty cities;

31 also half of Gilead, with Ashtaroth and Edrei, the cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan, *were* for the sons of Machir the son of Manasseh, for half of the sons of Machir according to their families.

Summary

32 These are *the territories* which Moses apportioned for an inheritance in the plains of Moab, beyond the Jordan at Jericho to the east.

33 But to the tribe of Levi, Moses did not give an inheritance; the LORD, the God of Israel, is their inheritance, as He had promised to them.

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