

March 10 Answers

- 1) God's war of vengeance against the Midianites of Moab. This was *not* an **ethnic** cleansing. It was a **holy** war commissioned by **God** in order to "**avenge** the people of Israel on the Midianites" (Num 31:2). The Midianites, along with the Moabites, had led Israel into sin through a strategy of sexual seduction (cf. Num 25:1–18). God's judgment had begun with Israel itself, and a plague killed some **24,000** people. This affirms that God's judgment begins with His own **house** (cf. 1 Pet 4:17; Rom 2:9). Now it was time for retribution on Midian for their part in the rebellion at Peor. This teaches us that those who lead God's people astray will be held **accountable** for their actions (cf. Luke 17:1–2). Moses ordered the Israelites to kill every **male**, including children, and every female who was not a **virgin**. Moses correctly pointed out that the Midianite women were especially to blame in the seduction, and so only the virgins should be spared. This teaches us that all life belongs to God, and He has the **right** as Creator to give and take life as He sees fit (cf. Gen 19). When God delegates the task of taking human life to us, we must **obey** (cf. Gen 9:6), but apart from His divine command, we are told to **leave** vengeance in His hands (Rom 12:19).