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## The War Against Midian

### 31: 1-54



**Chapter 31** picks up the storyline of **Chapter 25**, and the account of the debauchery of **Isra'el** at **Ba'al Peor** (to see link click [Ea](#) - **Taking a Stand for God**). The delay in describing this battle only adds punch to the content. We remember that **Midian** was placed under **the cherem** judgment of **Ha'Shem** (see the commentary on **Leviticus Ff** - **Cherem**) because of **its** part in carrying out **Balaam's** wicked scheme **to put a stumbling block before the sons of Isra'el, so that they might eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality (Revelation 2:14)**. As a result, **YHVH** said to **Moshe**, **"Treat the Midianites as enemies and kill them, because they treated you as enemies when they deceived you in the affair of Ba'al Peor (25:16-18a)**. This chapter tells the story of the holy war of **Isra'el** (see the commentary on **Deuteronomy Ag** - **The Problem of Holy War in the TaNaKh**), the judgment of **God** against **His enemies** and **the enemies of His people**.

The idea of a "holy war" almost seems like a contradiction in terms to many people today who find the concept distasteful, even in light of the evil terrorist attack by Hamas on October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Muslim terrorists proclaim their jihads against **Isra'el** and the United States, but the reader of Scripture can only understand this text by accepting the concept of a "holy war." **Yeshua Messiah Himself** will one day wage a "holy war" against the antichrist the armies of the world at the end of the Great Tribulation (see **Revelation Ex** - **The Eight Stage Campaign of**

**Armageddon**). Therefore, we must believe that the terrible events in this chapter are moral . . . and are from **God**! The most important issue in approaching texts such as this is not to concentrate on the suffering and pain of **the God-rejecting Midianties**, but to focus on the holiness of **the LORD** that it celebrates. In the midst of **His** terrible wrath, **God** demonstrates **His** mercy, as we will see.<sup>703</sup>