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The Ransom
31: 48-54

The ransom DIG: What need does ADONAI have of this spoil? How might giving God a share of the spoils enhance the Israelites fellowship with Him? Why did the elite units want to give extra atonement money? What did they give? How much did they give?

REFLECT: Which do you think brings greater joy to the Lord and the giver: Giving by assessed quotas, or by voluntary donations? Why are both needed to run the congregations of God? How do you share your triumphs with God? What spoils do you give Him?

The twelve elite units of soldiers paid a ransom as a free-will offering for their lives.

For a chapter that begins with such a grim story, there is a perfectly wonderful ending. This is the account of a spontaneous **free-will offering** to **the LORD** by **the twelve elite units** that fought against **the Midianites**. Beyond **the tribute they** were required to give of the animals and persons that had been distributed to **them** in the sharing of **the spoils of war**, there were innumerable objects **the soldiers** had taken for **their** own use as **they** looted **the Midianites** (**to see link click Fv – The Spoils of War for the Soldiers**).[728]

The officers in charge of the elite units who fought, the generals and commanders of the elite units (see **Fq – Report of the Battle**)**, approached Moshe and said to him, "Your servants have counted all the soldiers under our command, and not one of us is missing (31:48-49).** This was a miracle. The only explanation for this was the presence of **YHVH** among **His people**. When a census revealed that not a single **Israelite** had been lost, **the twelve elite units** raised **a free-will offering** of **golden vessels** from **their** spoils to give to **the Tabernacle**. **The soldiers** made a special gift to **the LORD** because He had made a special gift of life to them. This was a mark of gratitude from the Wilderness Generation. A share of **the spoils for ADONAI**, if you will. **They** said: **We have**

brought a free-will offering for ADONAI, what every man has obtained in the way of gold jewelry – armlets, bracelets, signet rings, earrings and belts – to make atonement (Hebrew: *kafar*, meaning ***a ransom*** *paid for a life*) **for ourselves before ADONAI (31:50).**[729] When **God** told **Noah** to **coat the ark with pitch inside and out,** the word for **pitch** is *kafir* **(Genesis 6:14)**. The word *kafar* can also be seen in **Exodus** to describe **the coating of tar and pitch** that covered **the papyrus basket** that **Jochebed** placed **Moses** in when **she defiled Pharaoh's** decree and **hid baby Moses (Exodus 2:3)**.

We have no reason to believe that the protection of the lives of every **soldier** in **the wars** of **Isra'el** ever happened again. This is certainly not the case in **Isra'el's war** with Hamas after the October 7th massacre. **Isra'el's war** with **the Midianites** must have been a singular event in **her** history. Therefore, it rightfully points us to **Messiah's** middle-east peace plan (see the commentary on **Revelation Ex – The Eight Stage Campaign of Armageddon**), where there will be no casualties when we return with **Him**. Our gratitude to **the LORD** will be even greater than **the Israeli soldiers** so long ago.

When **the commanders** spoke of **making atonement** for **themselves** before **ADONAI, they** weren't suggesting that **their** gifts of **gold** could in any way save **their souls (Psalm 49:6-9; First Peter 1:18-19)**. According to **Exodus 30:11-16**, each time there was a census in **Isra'el** (see **Ec – The Second Census: The New Generation of Hope**), the men twenty years and older were each to give a half shekel of silver as an **offering** to **the LORD**. This was known as **atonement money** (see the commentary on **Exodus Eu – The Atonement Money for the Tabernacle**) and was originally used to make the sockets for the posts that helped to form the Tabernacle frame **(Exodus 38:21-28)**. Realizing that **their** lives had graciously been spared, **the elite units from each tribe** wanted to give extra **atonement money** in thanksgiving to **ADONAI**. Ransoms saved those sentenced to death. Instead of bringing silver, **they** brought over **600 pounds of gold**, which **Moshe** and **Eleazar** received and put **into the Tabernacle**.[730]



Moshe and Eleazar the high priest accepted their gold, all the jewelry. All the gold in this gift which the generals of thousands and the commanders of hundreds set apart for ADONAI weighed 600 pounds. For the soldiers had taken spoils, every man for himself, now they gave a free-will offering back. They were thankful that not one of them was killed in battle. Moshe and Eleazar took the gold from the generals of thousands and the commanders of hundreds and brought it into the Tabernacle as a reminder for the people of Isra'el before ADONAI, thus paying the ransom price to support **the Tabernacle (31:51-54).** This was an enormous gift – and it came from grateful **men** to an all-protecting **God**.

Dear *heavenly **Father**, praise **You** that no one can outdo **You** in being generous and loving! It is a joy to give back to **You** a free-will offering of our time, money and thoughts. Though someone may be poor in the eyes of the world, they are really rich, if they have **Your** abiding presence in their lives as well as the indwelling of **the Ruach Ha'Kodesh**. **Yeshua answered and said to him: If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word. My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our dwelling with him (John 14:23).** Giving back to **You** our time by meditating on your awesome attributes and then praising **You**, is a wonderful way to both please **You** and refresh our own spirits. Praising **You** not only rightfully exalts **You**, our awesome and mighty heavenly **Father**, it also blesses the one who does the praising. It is so uplifting to think of **You** as our perfect bridegroom whom we shall spend all eternity with! What a wonderful and comforting thought! It is like when just engaged and thoughts of the future spouse fill one's mind all day long, so also thoughts of how worthy and wonderful **You** are fill the minds of **Your** children. **You** are worthy of all our praise! We delight to give **You** our love! In **Messiah Yeshua's** holy **Name** and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*