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And All the Levites Rallied to Moses 32: 25-29

And all the Levites rallied to Moses DIG: Who points the finger at whom? Why? What characterizes a life *without restraint*? What was the main concern for Aaron? For Moses? Who kills whom? How were the Levites blessed? How did obedience save their lives?

REFLECT: Most of us, at some point, have winked at sin in our lives. We are human. We fall short of the mark. How can we be real with ourselves about the extent of our sin? What standard do we hold our sin up against? How are you being blessed by your obedience to God today?

Obviously, not all of **the people** were guilty, but **those** who were had to be punished. **Moses saw that the people were** naked and **running wild,** committing **sexual immorality (First Corinthians 10:8). They** were indulging in what **they** had seen so many times in Egypt. The Hebrew word **running wild,** means *broken loose, uncovered, or without restraint.* It is the same word used in the testing of a woman accused of adultery in **Numbers 5:18**, so the two themes of idolatry and adultery are once again tied together.[677] **Aaron** was condemned as **the one** who had allowed **the Hebrews** to **get out of control and so become a laughing stock to their enemies** the Amalekites who lived in the area **(32:25).** The only reason they stopped **their** orgy was the terror of **Moses'** presence. The situation called for drastic action.

So Moses stood at the entrance to the camp and said: **Whoever is for**

ADONAI, come to me. No matter how **Aaron** had attempted to justify **himself**, what had been going on was Not acceptable, and **Moses** called for a separation. **And all the Levites,** who were **Moses'** tribal relatives **(2:1-2, 6:19-20), rallied to him.** Out of twelve tribes, **they** were the only ones to do so. **The Levites** were not ones to be provoked. When the prince of **Shechem** once raped **Levi's** sister **Dinah**, **he** and **his** brother **Simeon** tricked the men of the **city** into thinking they were going to allow **her** to marry him. As part of the marriage arrangement they deceived the men of **Shechem** into getting circumcised. The result of the plot was both tragic and cruel. **Three days later, while all of them were in** the greatest amount of **pain,** both **Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, took their swords and** went from one house to the next, **attacked the unsuspecting city, killing** each and **every male** until **they** were all dead **(Genesis 34:24-25).** So as far as **Levi's** descendants were concerned, the apple didn't fall very far from the tree. This was one tribe you didn't want to fool with.

Simeon and Levi were kindred spirits. **They** were always together and thought alike. They took vengeance on **Dinah's rapist** and the men of **Shechem** together. But at some point later on, **Levi** must have had a change of heart, for right from the start **Levi** and **his** descendants were brave and chose the harder path of obeying **God.** While from the start **Simeon** and **his** descendants decided to go **their** own way, not following **God** and **they** worshiped the golden calf.

Then Moses spoke directly to **the Levites** and invoked the divine formula by saying: **This is what ADONAI, the God of Isra'el,** says, which signified that the very words of **God** were being spoken. So this is what **God** said through **His** servant: **Each man strap a sword to his side. Go back and forth through the camp from one end to the other, each killing his brother and friend and neighbor** who was involved in this sin**. The Levites** volunteered to be one of the instruments of divine judgment, **and that day about three thousand of the people died (32:26-28). God** must have known **the three thousand people** who, like Pharaoh, were beyond repentance. That was not very many when you compare it to the millions of **Israelites** in the desert. Nevertheless, **God** *was* not, and *is* not, and *will* not be casual about sin.

As a reward for their willingness to undertake so difficult and tragic an assignment, they were set apart to **God**. **Then Moses** said: **You have been set apart to ADONAI today, for you** killed **your own sons and brothers, and He has blessed you this day** because of **your** obedience **(32:29). They** were later made responsible for the care of the holy objects in the Tabernacle **(Numbers 1:50-53).**

But obedience was required first.

On July 18, 1984, a woman came into McDonald's restaurant in San Ysidro, California with her five year-old daughter. While they were in line, James Huberty walked in with an Uzi semi-automatic machine gun and started firing. He killed twenty-two people that day. Boys were gunned down as they tried to ride away on their bikes. People were killed huddled under tables and hiding in storage rooms. In her panic, the mom instinctively started running. The next thing she knew, she found herself outside next to a very large storage bin on the side of McDonald's. She could see through the glass siding where the bathrooms were. It was then that she realized that her little girl wasn't with her. When she looked back inside, her daughter was standing inside the glass behind a very large trash container with the food trays stacked up on top. When their eyes met, the mom could see the look of terror in her daughter's eyes. She wanted to run outside to safety. But just then her mom saw Huberty walking toward her with his Uzi ready to fire. The mom put the palms of her hands up in front of her as if to say, "Stop." Then slowly she lowered her hands, signaling for her daughter to squat down. Going against all instinct, that was exactly what the little girl did. When Huberty came up to the trash container, he didn't see her squatting behind it. He looked, turned, and walked away. Once he was gone, the mother motioned for her daughter to come to her. She opened the glass door and ran into her mother's waiting arms. So like the Levites, obedience had saved her life. This is the spiritual principle: *rebellion leads to death and obedience leads to blessing*.