

## MATTOT

### Chapters/Verses:

Numbers 30:2 - 32:42

<sup>2</sup> Moses spoke to the heads of the Israelite tribes, saying: This is what the Lord has commanded:

<sup>3</sup> If a man makes a vow to the Lord or takes an oath imposing an obligation on himself, he shall not break his pledge; he must carry out all that has crossed his lips.

<sup>4</sup> If a woman makes a vow to the Lord or assumes an obligation while still in her father's household by reason of her youth, <sup>5</sup> and her father learns of her vow or her self-imposed obligation and offers no objection, all her vows shall stand and every self-imposed obligation shall stand. <sup>6</sup> But if her father restrains her on the day he finds out, none of her vows or self-imposed obligations shall stand; and the Lord will forgive her, since her father restrained her.

<sup>7</sup> If she should marry while her vow or the commitment to which she bound herself is still in force, <sup>8</sup> and her husband learns of it and offers no objection on the day he finds out, her vows shall stand and her self-imposed obligations shall stand. <sup>9</sup> But if her husband restrains her on the day that he learns of it, he thereby annuls her vow which was in force or the commitment to which she bound herself; and the Lord will forgive her. <sup>10</sup> — The vow of a widow or of a divorced woman, however, whatever she has imposed on herself, shall be binding upon her. — <sup>11</sup> So, too, if, while in her husband's household, she makes a vow or imposes an obligation on herself by oath, <sup>12</sup> and her husband learns of it, yet offers no objection — thus failing to restrain her — all her vows shall stand and all her self-imposed obligations shall stand. <sup>13</sup> But if her husband does annul them on the day he finds out, then nothing that has crossed her lips shall stand, whether vows or self-imposed obligations. Her husband has annulled them, and the Lord will forgive her. <sup>14</sup> Every vow and every sworn obligation of self-denial may be upheld by her husband or annulled by her husband. <sup>15</sup> If her husband offers no objection from that day to the next, he has upheld all the vows or obligations she has assumed: he has upheld them by offering no objection on the day he found out. <sup>16</sup> But if he annuls them after [the day] he finds out, he shall bear her guilt.

<sup>17</sup> Those are the laws that the Lord enjoined upon Moses between a man and his wife, and as between a father and his daughter while in her father's household by reason of her youth.

### Chapter 31

<sup>1</sup> The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup> "Avenge the Israelite people on the Midianites; then you shall be gathered to your kin."

<sup>3</sup> Moses spoke to the people, saying, "Let men be picked out from among you for a campaign, and let them fall upon Midian to wreak the Lord's vengeance on Midian. <sup>4</sup> You shall dispatch on the campaign a thousand from every one of the tribes of Israel."

<sup>5</sup> So a thousand from each tribe were furnished from the divisions of Israel, twelve thousand picked for the campaign. <sup>6</sup> Moses dispatched them on the campaign, a thousand from each tribe, with Phinehas son of Eleazar serving as a priest on the campaign, equipped with the sacred utensils and the trumpets for sounding the blasts. <sup>7</sup> They took the field against Midian, as the Lord had commanded Moses, and slew every male. <sup>8</sup> Along with their other victims, they slew the kings of Midian: Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, the five kings of Midian. They also put Balaam son of Beor to the sword.

<sup>9</sup> The Israelites took the women and children of the Midianites captive, and seized as booty all their beasts, all their herds, and all their wealth. <sup>10</sup> And they destroyed by fire all the towns in which they were settled, and their encampments. <sup>11</sup> They gathered all the spoil and all the booty, man and beast, <sup>12</sup> and they brought the captives, the booty, and the spoil to Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the whole Israelite community, at the camp in the steppes of Moab, at the Jordan near Jericho.

<sup>13</sup> Moses, Eleazar the priest, and all the chieftains of the community came out to meet them outside the camp. <sup>14</sup> Moses became angry with the commanders of the army, the officers of thousands and the officers of hundreds, who had come back from the military campaign. <sup>15</sup> Moses said to them, "You have spared every female! <sup>16</sup> Yet they are the very ones who, at the bidding of Balaam, induced the Israelites to trespass against the Lord in the matter of Peor, so that the Lord's community was struck by the plague. <sup>17</sup> Now, therefore, slay every male among the children, and slay also every woman who has known a man carnally; <sup>18</sup> but spare every young woman who has not had carnal relations with a man.

<sup>19</sup> "You shall then stay outside the camp seven days; every one among you or among your captives who has slain a person or touched a corpse shall cleanse himself on the third and seventh days. <sup>20</sup> You shall also cleanse every cloth, every article of skin, everything made of goats' hair, and every object of wood."

<sup>21</sup> Eleazar the priest said to the troops who had taken part in the fighting, "This is the ritual law that the Lord has enjoined upon Moses: <sup>22</sup> Gold and silver, copper, iron, tin, and lead <sup>23</sup> — any article that can withstand fire — these you shall pass through fire and they shall be clean, except that they must be cleansed with water of lustration; and anything that cannot withstand fire you must pass through water. <sup>24</sup> On the seventh day you shall wash your clothes and be clean, and after that you may enter the camp."

<sup>25</sup> The Lord said to Moses: <sup>26</sup> "You and Eleazar the priest and the family heads of the community take an inventory of the booty that was captured, man and beast, <sup>27</sup> and divide the booty equally between the combatants who engaged in the campaign and the rest of the community. <sup>28</sup> You shall exact a levy for the Lord: in the case of the warriors who engaged in the campaign, one item in five hundred, of persons, oxen, asses, and sheep, <sup>29</sup> shall be taken from their half-share and given to Eleazar the priest as a contribution to the Lord;<sup>30</sup> and from the half-share of the other Israelites you shall withhold one in every fifty human beings as well as cattle, asses, and sheep — all the animals — and give them to the Levites, who attend to the duties of the Lord's Tabernacle."

<sup>31</sup> Moses and Eleazar the priest did as the Lord commanded Moses. <sup>32</sup> The amount of booty, other than the spoil that the troops had plundered, came to 675,000 sheep, <sup>33</sup> 72,000 head of cattle, <sup>34</sup> 61,000 asses, <sup>35</sup> and a total of 32,000 human beings, namely, the women who had not had carnal relations.

<sup>36</sup> Thus, the half-share of those who had engaged in the campaign [was as follows]: The number of sheep was 337,500, <sup>37</sup> and the Lord's levy from the sheep was 675; <sup>38</sup> the cattle came to 36,000, from which the Lord's levy was 72; <sup>39</sup> the asses came to 30,500, from which the Lord's levy was 61. <sup>40</sup> And the number of human beings was 16,000, from which the Lord's levy was 32. <sup>41</sup> Moses gave the contributions levied for the Lord to Eleazar the priest, as the Lord had commanded Moses.

<sup>42</sup> As for the half-share of the other Israelites, which Moses withdrew from the men who had taken the field, <sup>43</sup> that half-share of the community consisted of 337,500 sheep, <sup>44</sup> 36,000 head of cattle, <sup>45</sup> 30,500 asses, <sup>46</sup> and 16,000 human beings. <sup>47</sup> From this half-share of the Israelites, Moses withheld one in every fifty humans and animals; and he gave them to the Levites, who attended to the duties of the Lord's Tabernacle, as the Lord had commanded Moses.

<sup>48</sup> The commanders of the troop divisions, the officers of thousands and the officers of hundreds, approached Moses. <sup>49</sup> They said to Moses, "Your servants have made a check of the warriors in our charge, and not one of us is missing. <sup>50</sup> So we have brought as an offering to the Lord such articles of gold as each of us came upon: armllets, bracelets, signet rings, earrings, and pendants, that expiation may be made for our persons before the Lord." <sup>51</sup> Moses and Eleazar the priest accepted the gold from them, all kinds of wrought articles. <sup>52</sup> All the gold that was offered by the officers of thousands and the officers of hundreds as a contribution to the Lord came to 16,750 shekels. <sup>53</sup> — But in the ranks, everyone kept his booty for himself. — <sup>54</sup> So Moses and Eleazar the priest accepted the gold from the officers of thousands and the officers of hundreds and brought it to the Tent of Meeting, as a reminder in behalf of the Israelites before the Lord.

## Chapter 32

<sup>1</sup> The Reubenites and the Gadites owned cattle in very great numbers. Noting that the lands of Jazer and Gilead were a region suitable for cattle, <sup>2</sup> the Gadites and the Reubenites came to Moses, Eleazar the priest, and the chieftains of the community, and said, <sup>3</sup>"Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo, and Beon — <sup>4</sup> the land that the Lord has conquered for the community of Israel is cattle country, and your servants have cattle. <sup>5</sup> It would be a favor to us," they continued, "if this land were given to your servants as a holding; do not move us across the Jordan."

<sup>6</sup> Moses replied to the Gadites and the Reubenites, "Are your brothers to go to war while you stay here? <sup>7</sup> Why will you turn the minds of the Israelites from crossing into the land that the Lord has given them? <sup>8</sup> That is what your fathers did when I sent them from Kadesh-barnea to survey the land. <sup>9</sup> After going up to the wadi Eshcol and surveying the land, they turned the minds of the Israelites from invading the land that the Lord had given them. <sup>10</sup> Thereupon the Lord was incensed and He swore, <sup>11</sup> 'None of the men from twenty years up who came out of Egypt shall see the land that I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for they did not remain loyal to Me — <sup>12</sup> none except Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite and Joshua son of Nun, for they remained loyal to the Lord.' <sup>13</sup>The Lord was incensed at Israel, and for forty years He made them wander in the wilderness, until the whole generation that had provoked the Lord's displeasure was gone. <sup>14</sup> And now you, a breed of sinful men, have replaced your fathers, to add still further to the Lord's wrath against Israel. <sup>15</sup> If you turn away from Him and He abandons them once more in the wilderness, you will bring calamity upon all this people."

<sup>16</sup> Then they stepped up to him and said, "We will build here sheepfolds for our flocks and towns for our children. <sup>17</sup> And we will hasten as shock-troops in the van of the Israelites until we have established them in their home, while our children stay in the fortified towns because of the inhabitants of the land. <sup>18</sup> We will not return to our homes until every one of the Israelites is in possession of his portion. <sup>19</sup> But we will not have a share with them in the territory beyond the Jordan, for we have received our share on the east side of the Jordan."

<sup>20</sup> Moses said to them, "If you do this, if you go to battle as shock-troops, at the instance of the Lord, <sup>21</sup> and every shock-fighter among you crosses the Jordan, at the instance of the Lord, until He has dispossessed His enemies before Him, <sup>22</sup> and the land has been subdued, at the instance of the Lord, and then you return — you shall be clear before the Lord and before Israel; and this land shall be your holding under the Lord. <sup>23</sup> But if you do not do so, you will have sinned against the Lord; and know that your sin will overtake you. <sup>24</sup> Build towns for your children and sheepfolds for your flocks, but do what you have promised."

<sup>25</sup> The Gadites and the Reubenites answered Moses, "Your servants will do as my lord commands. <sup>26</sup> Our children, our wives, our flocks, and all our other livestock will stay behind in the towns of Gilead; <sup>27</sup> while your servants, all those recruited for war, cross over, at the instance of the Lord, to engage in battle — as my lord orders."

<sup>28</sup> Then Moses gave instructions concerning them to Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the family heads of the Israelite tribes. <sup>29</sup> Moses said to them, "If every shock-fighter among the Gadites and the Reubenites crosses the Jordan with you to do battle, at the instance of the Lord, and the land is subdued before you, you shall give them the land of Gilead as a holding. <sup>30</sup> But if they do not cross over with you as shock-troops, they shall receive holdings among you in the land of Canaan."

<sup>31</sup> The Gadites and the Reubenites said in reply, "Whatever the Lord has spoken concerning your servants, that we will do. <sup>32</sup> We ourselves will cross over as shock-troops, at the instance of the Lord, into the land of Canaan; and we shall keep our hereditary holding across the Jordan."

<sup>33</sup> So Moses assigned to them — to the Gadites, the Reubenites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh son of Joseph — the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites and the kingdom of King Og of Bashan, the land with its various cities and the territories of their surrounding towns. <sup>34</sup> The Gadites rebuilt Dibon, Ataroth, Aroer, <sup>35</sup> Atroth-shophan, Jazer, Jogbehah, <sup>36</sup> Beth-nimrah, and Beth-haran as fortified towns or as enclosures for flocks. <sup>37</sup> The Reubenites rebuilt Heshbon, Elealeh, Kiriathaim, <sup>38</sup> Nebo, Baal-meon — some names being changed — and Sibmah; they gave [their own] names to towns that they rebuilt. <sup>39</sup> The descendants of Machir son of Manasseh went to Gilead and captured it, dispossessing the Amorites who were there; <sup>40</sup> so Moses gave Gilead to Machir son of Manasseh, and he settled there. <sup>41</sup> Jair son of Manasseh went and captured their villages, which he renamed Havvoth-jair. <sup>42</sup> And Nobah went and captured Kenath and its dependencies, renaming it Nobah after himself.