

## Study Guide

### Numbers 31

**Big Idea:** The fury of God always seeks the greater good.

1. Should parents let kids behave however they want to? (i.e.- "You do you."). Is that loving? Discuss.
2. God of Fury. Read Numbers 31:1-18.  
In western culture, we struggle with passages like this because of our presumption of innocence. Have you ever noticed someone say, "*He's a good kid.*"?  
The truth is, he is selfish and rebellious like the rest of us. None of us naturally seek after God or desire to love Him. Why do you think God ordered Israel to war against Midian? Discuss the fury of God and what good could come of it.
3. Read Isaiah 43:11-12.  
*"I am the Lord, and besides me there is no savior. <sup>12</sup> I declared and saved and proclaimed, when there was no strange god among you; and you are my witnesses,"*  
Why was it so important to preserve Israel from idolatry? What greater good might God have been after?
4. Read Numbers 31:19-24.  
Why do you think God was concerned and specific when it came to purity laws? What might that mean for us today? Read Hebrews 9:13-14 and discuss what God is most concerned about when it comes to our purity?
5. Read Numbers 31:25-47.  
A remarkable number of livestock and the spoils of war is listed. Why do you think God gives specific instructions on how to distribute the goods? Discuss.
6. Read Numbers 31:48-54.  
Notice that not one soldier was missing from the war (v. 49b). That is supernatural!  
Read Romans 12:18-19. How comforting is it for you to know that vengeance belongs to God? What areas of injustice do you need to commit to God today, and ask Him to bring justice? Spend some time in prayer together.

## Message Outline

### Numbers 31

**Big Idea:** The fury of God always seeks the greater good.

**Romans 12:18-19**

"If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.<sup>19</sup> Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.'"

### **Ezekiel 21:3 & 11- Babylon against Israel**

<sup>3</sup>Tell them, 'The Lord says, "I am against you. I will pull out my sword..."'

<sup>11</sup>...I have told Nebuchadnezzar to shine his sword. It is in his hand.

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#### **A. God of Fury (v. 1-18)**

The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup>"Avenge the people of Israel on the Midianites. Afterward you shall be gathered to your people."

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#### **A. God of Fury (v. 1-18)**

<sup>3</sup>So Moses spoke to the people, saying, "Arm men from among you for the war, that they may go against Midian to execute the Lord's vengeance on Midian. <sup>4</sup>You shall send a thousand from each of the tribes of Israel to the war." <sup>5</sup>So there were provided, out of the thousands of Israel, a thousand from each tribe, twelve thousand armed for war. <sup>6</sup>And Moses sent them to the war, a thousand from each tribe, together with Phinehas the son of Eleazar the priest, with the vessels of the sanctuary and the trumpets for the alarm in his hand.

#### **A. God of Fury (v. 1-18)**

<sup>7</sup>They warred against Midian, as the Lord commanded Moses, and killed every male. <sup>8</sup>They killed the kings of Midian with the rest of their slain, Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, the five kings of Midian. And they also killed Balaam the son of Beor with the sword.

#### **A. God of Fury (v. 1-18)**

<sup>14</sup>And Moses was angry with the officers of the army, the commanders of thousands and the commanders of hundreds, who had come from service in the war.<sup>15</sup> Moses said to them, "Have you let all the women live? <sup>16</sup>Behold, these, on Balaam's advice, caused the people of Israel to act treacherously against the Lord in the incident of Peor, and so the plague came among the congregation of the Lord..."

### **The Greater Context**

#### **Isaiah 43:11-12**

"I am the Lord, and besides me there is no savior. <sup>12</sup>I declared and saved and proclaimed, when there was no strange god among you; and you are my witnesses,"

#### **B. God of Purity (v. 19-24)**

<sup>19</sup>Encamp outside the camp seven days...

...<sup>22</sup> only the gold, the silver, the bronze, the iron, the tin, and the lead, <sup>23</sup> everything that can stand the fire, you shall pass through the fire, and it shall be clean. Nevertheless, it shall also be purified with the water for impurity. And whatever cannot stand the fire, you shall pass through the water. <sup>24</sup> You must wash your clothes on the seventh day, and you shall be clean. And afterward you may come into the camp."

### **Hebrews 9:13-14**

For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

### **C. God of Fairness (v. 25-47)**

<sup>25</sup> The Lord said to Moses, <sup>26</sup> "Take the count of the plunder that was taken, both of man and of beast, you and Eleazar the priest and the heads of the fathers' houses of the congregation, <sup>27</sup> and divide the plunder into two parts between the warriors who went out to battle and all the congregation. <sup>28</sup> And levy for the Lord a tribute from the men of war who went out to battle, one out of five hundred, of the people and of the oxen and of the donkeys and of the flocks. ... give them to the Levites who keep guard over the tabernacle of the Lord."

### **D. God of Protection (v. 48-54)**

<sup>48</sup> Then the officers who were over the thousands of the army, the commanders of thousands and the commanders of hundreds, came near to Moses <sup>49</sup> and said to Moses, "Your servants have counted the men of war who are under our command, and there is not a man missing from us. <sup>50</sup> And we have brought the Lord's offering, what each man found, articles of gold, armlets and bracelets, signet rings, earrings, and beads, to make atonement for ourselves before the Lord."

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### **Revelation 19:11**

<sup>11</sup> Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war.

### **1 John 4:8b-9a**

God is love. <sup>9</sup> This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BeGmWMIqBvo>

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### **Isaiah 53:10-11**

"Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him...shall...make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities."

**Romans 5:1**

"Therefore now, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

**Romans 8:1**

"There is now therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus..."