

Numbers 31:37

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the LORD'S tribute of the sheep was six hundred and threescore and fifteen.

Analysis

And the LORD'S tribute of the sheep was six hundred and threescore and fifteen—The Hebrew *terumah* (תְּרוּמָה, 'heave offering') designates the portion lifted up and consecrated to Yahweh. This precise 0.2% levy (675 from 337,500 sheep) established Israel's recognition that all war spoils belonged first to God. The meticulous accounting reflects not mere bookkeeping but covenantal theology: victory comes from the LORD, and He claims first-fruits of plunder.

Unlike pagan nations who credited military prowess or patron deities with conquest, Israel's tribute system acknowledged Yahweh as the true Commander who grants victory. This prefigures Christ's total claim on the spoils of His cross-victory over sin and death (Colossians 2:15).

Historical Context

The Midianite war (Numbers 31) occurred circa 1406 BC as Israel prepared to enter Canaan. Moses led this punitive campaign in response to Midian's seduction of Israel at Baal-peor (Numbers 25). The precise tribute calculations demonstrate sophisticated administrative systems already functioning in wilderness Israel.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. What 'spoils' from your victories do you withhold from God rather than offering Him the first-fruits?
2. How does recognizing God as the source of success change your attitude toward material blessings?
3. In what ways does Christ's victory over sin require total consecration of your life to Him?

Interlinear Text

יְהוָה	תָּבִיבָה	לַיהוָה	מִן	הַצֹּאֵן	שֵׁשׁ	מֵאֹת	שְׁמֵסֵם
H1961	tribute	And the LORD'S	H4480	of the sheep	was six	hundred	H2568
	H4371	H3068		H6629	H8337	H3967	
וּשְׁבַעִים:							
and threescore and fifteen							
H7657							
