

Numbers 31:39

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the asses were thirty thousand and five hundred; of which the LORD'S tribute was threescore and one.

Analysis

And the asses were thirty thousand and five hundred; of which the LORD'S tribute was threescore and one—The Hebrew chamor (חמור, 'donkey/ass') designated essential beasts of burden in Israel's economy. Unlike horses associated with warfare and Egyptian oppression, donkeys represented humble transport and agricultural work. The 61 animals consecrated to God underscore that even mundane resources belong to Him.

Nothing is too common for God's claim. The same donkey species carried Mary to Bethlehem and bore Christ into Jerusalem (Matthew 21:5), demonstrating God's sovereign use of humble instruments for His glory.

Historical Context

Donkeys were more valuable than horses in ancient Israel's terrain and economy. They transported goods, plowed fields, and provided reliable transport. The large number captured (30,500) reveals Midian operated extensive trade networks—fitting for descendants of Abraham's Keturah (Genesis 25:2).

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. Do you reserve only 'special' things for God, or does He have claim on the ordinary aspects of your life?
2. How might God want to use your 'donkey'—your mundane skills and resources—for His purposes?
3. What does it mean that Jesus chose a humble donkey rather than a warhorse for His triumphal entry?

Interlinear Text

וּמִכֶּסֶּם	מֵאֹת	וְחֲמִשָּׁה	אֶלֶף	שָׁלֹשׁ	וְחֲמִירִים
tribute	hundred	and five	thousand	were thirty	And the asses
H4371	H3967	H2568	H505	H7970	H2543
וְשָׁשִׁים:					
was threescore	and one	of which the LORD'S			
H8346	H259	H3068			

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