

Numbers 31:54

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Moses and Eleazar the priest took the gold of the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and brought it into the tabernacle of the congregation, for a memorial for the children of Israel before the LORD.

Analysis

And Moses and Eleazar the priest took the gold of the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and brought it into the tabernacle of the congregation, for a memorial for the children of Israel before the LORD— The gold's destination—**tabernacle of the congregation** (אוהל מועד ohel mo'ed, tent of meeting)—designated it as sacred treasury rather than personal use. The purpose: **for a memorial** (לזכרון lezikaron) **before the LORD** (לפני יהוה lifnei YHWH), creating permanent testimony to God's miraculous zero-casualty deliverance.

Memorial objects in Israel's worship (Aaron's rod, manna jar, memorial stones) testified to divine interventions for future generations. Jesus instituted communion as memorial: 'This do in remembrance of me' (Luke 22:19). Physical objects and practices anchor spiritual truth in tangible reality, preventing abstract theology from disconnecting from historical acts. The Church needs memorials reminding us that God acts in space-time history, not merely inspiring subjective religious experience.

Historical Context

The tabernacle treasury stored sacred objects with memorial significance: Aaron's budded rod (Numbers 17:10), golden pot of manna (Exodus 16:32-34), memorial stones, and now Midianite war gold. These memorials taught successive generations that God's character revealed through past faithfulness predicts future reliability—memorial stones prompt children's questions, creating teaching opportunities (Joshua 4:6-7,21-24).

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does storing memorial gold 'before the LORD' in the tabernacle teach that testimonies of divine faithfulness belong in corporate worship, not privatized spirituality?
2. What 'memorial objects' or practices could your church establish to remind future generations of God's specific interventions and faithfulness?
3. How can you cultivate spiritual disciplines of remembering and testifying to God's past faithfulness as foundation for present trust?

Interlinear Text

וָקַח ח	מֹשֶׁה ה	וְאֶלְעָזָר ר	הַכֹּהֵן	אֶת	הַזָּהָב ב	תִּמָּא ת
took	And Moses	and Eleazar	the priest	H853	the gold	H853
H3947	H4872	H499	H3548		H2091	
שָׁרֵי י	הָאֲלָפִים ים	וְהֵמָּא וְת	וָבֹאוּ	אֹתוֹ	אֶל	
of the captains	of thousands	and of hundreds	and brought	H853	H413	
H8269	H505	H3967	H935			
אֶל הַל	מוֹעֵד ד	זָכָר וִן	לְבָנֵי			
it into the tabernacle	of the congregation	for a memorial	for the children			
H168	H4150	H2146	H1121			
לְיִשְׂרָאֵל ל	לִפְנֵי י	יְהוָה:				
of Israel	before	the LORD				
H3478	H6440	H3068				

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 30:16 (Temple): And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls.

Zechariah 6:14 (Temple): And the crowns shall be to Helem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedaiah, and to Hen the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of the LORD.