

"Take the sum of the booty that was taken and divide the booty into two parts, both of man and of beast you and Elazar Ha'Kohen... and divide the booty into two parts between those who took the war upon them and between all the congregation... and of Bnei Yisrael's half you shall take one portion of fifty and you shall give it to the Leviim who keep the charge of the Mishkan of Hashem." (31:25,26,30)

The *Torah* dedicates more than twenty *pesukim* to describing the distribution of the booty taken from Midyan. It goes on to list the number of sheep and cattle, relating the manner in which they were divided. Why is this entire activity eternalized in the *Torah* for posterity? Is there a special message to be gleaned from here?

Horav Elchanan Sorotzkin z.l. explains that the *Torah* seeks to emphasize the importance of each member of the Jewish army, therefore it stresses those individuals who actually engage the enemy in battle, as well as those who stay behind. The latter contribute their share of the effort through *tefillos*, *Torah* study, and moral support. One should not think that the members of *Shevet Levi*, who have been singled out to "*keep the charge of the Mishkan Hashem*," are less important participants in this war than the actual soldiers who bore arms and fought.

Chazal poignantly express this idea in the *pasuk* "*Our feet were standing in your gate, Yerushalayim*" (*Tehillim* 122). What caused our feet to remain strong and erect in time of war? What gave us the courage and fortitude to fight? "*Your gates*" refers to the gates of the *batei midrash*, where our holy *Torah* was being studied diligently. These gates provided the merit for our success in battle.