

Deuteronomy 32:43

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/deut/deut-32/deuteronomy-3243/>

Moses now comments on the LORD's speech as he invites the nations to join in the celebration of God's gracious acts on Israel's behalf.

Moses continues to set forth the Song of Moses for Israel to sing and remember their covenant with God. This is just prior to the time when Moses will die, and Joshua will lead the people across the Jordan into the Promised Land.

After the LORD's speech in which He demonstrated His superiority (vv. 39-42), Moses invited the nations to join in to celebrate God's gracious acts on behalf of His covenant people, Israel. He began with an imperative: *Rejoice, O nations, with His people* (v. 43). The verb translated as *rejoice* (Heb. "rānan") means "shout for joy" or "cause to exult." The Gentile nations were invited to celebrate the Israelites' deliverance and full restoration. By inviting all nations to rejoice in Israel's full restoration, Moses anticipated a day when all people groups would acknowledge the God of Israel as the only righteous judge.

The reason for the celebration was that *He will avenge the blood of His servants*. The term *blood* refers to violent death. The verb to *avenge* (Heb. "nāqam") means to punish someone in return for wrongs done to somebody else.

The concept of blood revenge reflects an ancient Near Eastern practice by which a close relative (a kinsman-redeemer) was responsible for protecting the family and punishing a criminal in a way that would fit the crime. Boaz was an example of this (Ruth 2:1, 3:2).

In this song, however, the avenger of blood (kinsman-redeemer) was the LORD Himself. He would avenge the blood of His *servants* (Israel) and *render vengeance* on those who brought violence to Israel because such people were not His *servants* but rather *His adversaries*.

Lastly, the LORD would also *atone for His land and His people*. The verb *atone* means "cover over," but it can also mean "ransom" (Numbers 35:31), or "reconcile." It is taken up from the concept of the Old Testament

sacrificial worship in which the Israelites had to perform certain rituals to receive the forgiveness and mercy of the Suzerain God (Leviticus 16:11-22). The purpose of the sacrifice was to reconcile two parties (in this case, the LORD and His people) by providing a ransom. The ultimate example of this is Jesus Christ giving Himself as a ransom so that we (sinners) could be reconciled to God (Matthew 20:28; 1 Timothy 2:6; Romans 5:10-11; Colossians 1:20).

In the song, the Suzerain God cleared away the guilt of His covenant *people* and His *land*. God's atoning work was needed because the shedding of the blood polluted the land of Israel. That is to say, if blood had been shed on the land, then it was necessary that atonement be made to cleanse the land and remove all impurity and guilt in it (Numbers 35:33).

Biblical Text:

⁴³ **Rejoice, O nations, *with* His people;
For He will avenge the blood of His servants,
And will render vengeance on His adversaries,
And will atone for His land *and* His people.**