One Law, Importance of Sabbath, Tsiytsit, Fire Holders, & Plague

Numbers 14:38-16:50

Reading Questions

1. Who are the only ones over the age of 20 when they spied out the land of Yisra'el who were permitted to enter the land?
2. What laws are strangers supposed to follow?
3. Is it a sin to not do all the commands that יהוה spoke to Mosheh?
4. Is there a difference between sinning by mistake and sinning defiantly?
5. What is the penalty for breaking the Sabbath?
6. What does this show us about the Sabbath?
7. What are we commanded to wear on our garments, why are we commanded to wear this, and what can we learn from this?
8. What did Mosheh first do when he and Aharon were being accused and what can we learn from this?
9. They assembled against Mosheh and Aharon, but who did Mosheh say they had set against and what can we learn from this?
10. Why are the fire holders of the 250 men Set-Apart?
11. Who are the only ones permitted to offer incense before יהוה?
12. What was the response of Mosheh and Aharon when יהוה told them to separate from the congregation that He would consume them and what can we learn from this?

Reading Answers

1. יהושע son of Nun, and Kalev son of Yephunneh (Numbers 14:38)

2. The same as the laws for the children of Yisra'el (Numbers 15:15-16)

3. Yes (Numbers 15:22)

4. Yes (Numbers 15:30-31)

5. Being stoned to death (Numbers 15:35).

6. It is a serious sin to break the Sabbath.

7. Tsiytsit (Numbers 15:38), braided cords (Deuteronomy 22:12), upon the wings of our garments with a blue cord upon it, to look at and remember all the commands of

יהוה and not search after our own heart and our own eyes, so that we remember and do all His commands and be Set-Apart unto Him. What we can learn from this is that remembering and doing all the commands of יהוה is part of being Set-Apart (Holy) unto Him (Numbers 15:37-41).

Although Numbers 15:38 says to make Tsiytsit, Deuteronomy 22:12 specifies that we are to make Gediliym. Gediliym appears to mean "braided cords/threads" or "braids". The only other place the word Gediliym is used is 1 Kings 7:17 where most translations translate it as "wreaths". A wreath is round, but is also of an interwoven design. I don't think this word has anything to do with round wreaths, so I would consider perhaps "braided cords", "braided threads", or just "braids" to be more accurate for describing what Gediliym probably is referring to – an interweaving of sorts – braids or braided cords/threads. So it appears to me that the Tsiytsit are supposed to be braided.

In addition, after reconsidering how Numbers 15:38 is written, it appears to be two commands:

1) Make Tsiytsit on the wings of your garments (which Deuteronomy 22:12 shows should be braided)
2) Put a blue cord upon the Tsiytsit

It appears, therefore, the Tsiytsit is supposed to have already been made before you get to the step of putting the blue cord upon it. So I am reconsidering doing my Tsiytsit for my garments in a way where I braid white thread and make Tsiytsit of braided white thread, and then after that is already completed, then wrap a blue cord around it in such a way that the braided Tsiytsit is still visible but the blue cord is securely wrapped upon the Tsiytsit also. I may post a video or pictures on the website at some point if I do this to show an example. Technically, it doesn't tell you what color the Tsiytsit is to be, only that a blue cord/thread is to be put upon it. It was likely back then that the Tsiytsit would be whatever color the garment was as it was probably made out of the same material as the garment. However, there is no instruction requiring it be white or any specific color, or not any specific color. It seems it would probably not be blue though, or the blue cord/thread upon it would not stand out as it seems it is supposed to.

In addition, I believe since we're supposed to look at the Tsiytsit, it is clear it is the outer garment upon which these should go. However, if we don't know which garment will be our outer garment on a given day, we can put them on all our garments. For example, in the summer we may not need a jacket and so our tunic may be our outermost garment. In that case, you would want them on your tunic or t-shirt. However, in the winter you might wear a long warm jacket and want to put them therefore also on the corners/wings of that jacket as well. I also believe it was the outer garment because in Matthew 9:20 a woman who needed healing touched

the Tsiytsit of **יהושע**'s garment. I don't think she could have done this so easily had this been his inner garment and not his outer garment.

8. He fell on his face. What we learn from this is that we can see his humility and his desire to do what is right (Numbers 16:4).

9. Mosheh said they were set against **יהוה**. What we can learn from this is that we do not want to be against those whom **יהוה** has put in authority or service to Him in some regard. They thought they were against Mosheh and Aharon, but were really set against **יהוה** (Numbers 16:11).

10. They brought them before **יהוה** (Numbers 16:38).

11. The sons of Aharon (Numbers 16:40).

12. They fell on their faces and in one instance Mosheh instructed Aharon and Aharon took the fire holder with incense and made atonement for the people. What we can learn from this is that their response probably shows one reason they were in the service they were in; because they cared for the people even though the people came against them (Numbers 16:21-22, 44-45).

Reading Notes

- Numbers 15:30-31 sounds somewhat similar to Hebrews 10:26-31.

- The word "gather" in Numbers 15:32-33 is coming from a Hebrew word qosheish (קֹשֵׁשׁ) (Strong's # H7197) which is the same word used in Exodus 5:7 and Exodus 5:12 when the children of Yisra'el had to "gather" stubble for straw. This gives me the impression that possibly this is considered work because it may involve searching out to collect things you don't yet have. In the camp at the Feast of The Tree Huts (Tabernacles) this becomes a real-life situation where people need to understand practically what you can and can't do for wood, etc. because real fires are used at the feast. This is when me and a brother discussed this and I researched it further to discover it was the same word as in Exodus 5. It seems that if the wood were already in a pile and somewhat close to the fire, it is not gathering to grab a little wood and throw it in a fire that had already been started before Shabbat. It does not seem it is merely the act of carrying the wood a few feet, but possibly the fact that the wood was not yet gathered and the real work would be if I have to go and search for the sticks or wood to start with. That is not an enjoyable task and definitely a distraction from a Shabbat day whereas just taking a little wood from an already "gathered" pile to an already lit fire nearby is a lot less work. However, I am no Hebrew scholar or expert, so search this matter out for yourself and pray for guidance. Never do something that violates your conscience, and never break Shabbat. These are just my thoughts after studying it out a little.

- It is interesting that as we "look" at the Tzitziyot, we are supposed to remember the commands to not search after our own heart **and** our own **eyes**. Instead of searching after our own eyes (i.e. what we desire to see happen), we can think about what יהוה desires to see done (i.e. focus more on being obedient to His commands rather than what we want – let His desire be our focus).

- Numbers 16:26 shows where Mosheh told them to get away from the tents of the men who had done wrong and not touch their belongings even, so that they do not share or be consumed in their sins. This reminds me of verses such as 1 Timothy 5:22, 2 John 1:10-11, and Revelation 18:4. We do not want to be partakers of things with people doing evil and be consumed or destroyed along with them.

- The only verse in Hebrew where Tsiytsit is mentioned besides Numbers 15:38-39 is Ezekiel 8:3. The word "lock" in Ezekiel 8:3 when referring to a lock of his hair, is actually Tsiytsit. This shows that, perhaps, the best translation for Tsiytsit may be "lock" instead of tassel, but that is debatable. So, perhaps, we are to make a "lock" on the wings of our garments, and Deuteronomy 22:12 would be specifying that it would be a braided lock.

Related Verses

Jealous of Mosheh & Aharon: Psalms 106:16-18
Tassels/Tsiytsit/Fringes/Lock: Deuteronomy 22:12, Ezekiel 8:3, Matthew 9:20, Matthew 23:5, Luke 8:44
Wings: Exodus 19:4, Ruth 2:12, 3:9, Psalms 57:1