Lewites' Inheritance & Red Heifer

Numbers 16:41-20:13

Reading Questions

1. What was the sign or token for the rebels and why?
2. Who is joined to Aharon and his sons and what are they to do and not do?
3. Who is not to come near the priests and when?
4. What must be ransomed and for how much?
5. What is the portion and inheritance of Aharon and his sons?
6. Who gets the tithe and what do they do with the tithe?
7. What is the water for uncleanness used for?
8. How long is someone unclean for when touching a dead body?
9. What is needed for the water for uncleanness?
10. What is the cleansing process for someone who touched a dead body?
11. What happens if someone does not go through the cleansing process?
12. What is the law for when someone dies in a tent and what can we do today in consideration of this?
13. What is the law for dead bodies in an open field?
14. What is the cleansing process for becoming clean after becoming unclean through a dead body in a tent, open field, grave, etc., and what part of this can we do today?
15. What is the penalty for not being cleansed from defilements from a dead body in a tent, open field, grave, etc. and why?
16. What happens when someone unclean from one of these things mentioned in Numbers 19 touches something?
17. What was Mosheh commanded to do that he did not, why did he not do it, and what was the penalty?

Reading Answers

1. The rod of Aharon, of the house of Lewi, budded with ripe almonds, placed before the Witness/Testimony to show that Aharon and His Sons were the ones chosen by יהוה and to put an end to the grumblings against יהוה so that they do not die (Numbers 17). This was also possibly important so that the children of Yisra'el realized it wasn't Mosheh and Aharon lifting themselves up, but that יהוה had been the one to choose Aharon and his sons and the tribe of Lewi.

2. The Lewites are joined to Aharon and His Sons to serve them and to guard their charge, and the duty of the tent, but not come near the furnishings of the Set-Apart place or the altar (Numbers 18:2-4, 8).

3. A stranger is not to come near. In context, this appears to apply while they are doing their priestly duties in the Tent (Numbers 18:4, 7).

4. The firstborn of man or any unclean animal after it is one month old for five sheqels of silver (Numbers 18:15-16).

5. יהוה (Numbers 18:20) and a tenth of the tithe (Numbers 18:21)

6. The Lewites get the tithe, and a tenth of the tithe, the best and set-apart part of it, goes to Aharon and his sons. The tithe is eaten. (Numbers 18:21-32). You can click here to read a little about tithing if you want to hear more about our perspective on this issue.

7. For cleansing from sin (Numbers 19:9). What sin? Uncleanness. This shows another example, similar to Leviticus 5, that indicates the likelihood that uncleanness, even if for seemingly innocent things like being inside a room with a dead body as many do when loved ones pass away, is still a sin. The uncleanness itself is a sin. For more information about uncleanness and the question of whether or not it is a sin to be unclean, see reading notes for Week 23. Also, remember that 1 Corinthians 6:19 teaches us that our body is also the Dwelling Place also – so maybe this is also related as well.

8. Seven days (Numbers 19:11) as long as they are cleansed with the water for uncleanness. However, if they are not cleansed properly with the water for uncleanness, then they would not be clean on the seventh day (Numbers 19:12, 20).

9. Red heifer ashes (Numbers 19:1-10).

10. They are to be cleansed with the water for uncleanness on the third and seventh day, and on the seventh day cleanse themselves, bathe, and wash their garments; then they will be clean in the evening after the end of the seventh day (Numbers 19:12, 17-19). It is a bit more detailed than that, however, so make sure you read all of Numbers 19 to get the full instructions.

11. His uncleanness is still on him, he defiles the Dwelling Place of יהוה, he is cut off from Yisra'el (Numbers 19:20).

12. Read Numbers 19:14-15. In consideration of this, what we can do today is not use vessels that were open to eat or drink from if those vessels were inside a location where someone died. I'm not sure what kind of vessels this is speaking of specifically, but I guess we would want to cover all vessels (perhaps bowls, cups, pots, pans, etc.?) we have if someone in the home is near death and we are caring for them in the home. Alternatively, if we are concerned about this we could just get new vessels and get rid of the old if the person near death did in fact die while they

were open. We also would not want to use any vessels from a hospital for eating or drinking if we have an alternative since people commonly die there.

Of course, if we're caring for someone who is very sick in a hospital, they and/or we may not have much choice in the matter if we want to continue caring for them. In situations like that, we could use temporary vessels to eat, drink from, and/or store food in or just get new vessels to replace the ones that we took in the hospital with us. I'm not exactly sure what the Father wants us to do in these situations, but I'm sharing some ideas for people to consider.

One way that I practically applied this in my own life was I did avoid eating or drinking inside a funeral home when I was there after someone in the family had died. After reading this section of the Scriptures it just didn't seem like the kind of place to be having a meal or even a cup of water.

13. Read Numbers 19:16.

14. The cleansing process is mentioned in Numbers 19:17-20. The part we can do today is this: If we go to a funeral (inside where a dead body is) or a cemetery (possibly walking on graves), although we don't have physical red heifer ashes and other things needed, we can wash our garments and bathe in water on the seventh day as mentioned in Numbers 19:19 to demonstrate our desire to be obedient to His word. However, in doing this, we have to realize this is not really completing what is required in the law since we do not have the red heifer ashes and other things required. This does not accomplish what is required in Numbers 19, but rather is being suggested just as a means to show יהוה we do love Him and care about what He says in His Torah (law/teaching).

    Not being able to accomplish this literally as Numbers 19 requires seems to be another reason that we also cannot do a literal Passover as commanded in Exodus 12. For the other reasons why we cannot do a literal Passover as commanded in Exodus 12, read *the reading notes Week 16 answer for the question, 'Should believers today take a lamb on Passover and perform the Passover with all its laws and ordinances, including the blood on the doorposts, etc., or not?'*.

    However, what does accomplish all that we need to be pleasing in the sight of יהוה is the offering of His Son יהושע who was given for us, to make atonement for us and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (Isaiah 53, 1 John 1:9).

15. Being cut off from among the assembly/congregation because of defiling the Set-Apart Place and not having water for uncleanness sprinkled on them (Numbers 19:20).

16. It's unclear what happens, if anything. In the past I thought Numbers 19:22 may have been saying that the thing they touch is unclean, and anyone touching

becomes unclean, but now I'm wondering if Numbers 19:22 is actually talking about the one who does the sprinkling in Numbers 19:21 instead. See below notes for more comments about this.

17. Mosheh was commanded to speak to the rock but he struck it instead. יהוה said he did not believe Him to set Him apart in the eyes of the children of Yisra'el (Numbers 20:12). This appears to be one reason why. We also learn from Psalms 106:32-33 that another possible reason he did this is because he was provoked. According to some translations, he became bitter and spoke rashly. However, not all translations translate the verses in Psalms the same way. The penalty was that Mosheh would not bring the assembly into the land which they have been given.

Reading Notes

- In the past I had felt that it was not clear to me in Numbers 19:22 if the touching mentioned in the last part of the verse is referring to a person touching a person, or a person touching the item that became unclean through the touching of the unclean. While it may be possible that it is actually saying someone can become unclean by touching an item that was made unclean through being touched by someone defiled for a being, I have now come to another possible and likely explanation. Now, I believe it is likely that the "unclean being" mentioned in Numbers 19:22 may actually be, and probably is referring to, *"the one who sprinkles the water for uncleanness"* in verse 21. In context, verse 21 tells us the one doing the sprinkling also ends up becoming unclean himself, but only until evening of that day when he touched the water for uncleanness. So, it is possible that verse 22 is basically saying that if the one who did the sprinkling touches something it becomes unclean. Also, the word "it" is not necessarily needed as part of the translation. So the end of verse 22 might just say, *"And the being who touches is unclean until evening."* The being who touches what? Maybe the water for uncleanness. Maybe the end of Numbers 19:22 is just re-iterating that the one doing the sprinkling who touches the water for uncleanness is unclean until evening. I consider that to be the most likely explanation of Numbers 19:22, although I leave open the possibility in my mind of other understandings related to the one defiled for a being also.

- The first version of the Ancient Hebrew Research Center Revised Mechanical Translation (not the current version) shows the name Mir'yam to mean "Bitter Sea". It is interesting to note that after Mir'yam (Bitter Sea) died, they had no "water" (Numbers 20:1-2). The current version does not put the meaning of names directly in the text as the first version did.

- It appears the garments washed in Numbers 19:19 would be referring specifically to the ones worn while becoming unclean through a dead body, grave, etc. but possibly also any others worn during that seven day period. If Numbers 19:22 was referring to the one defiled for a being, then perhaps also any garments they touched at all, but as previously stated, I'm not sure that's what Numbers 19:22 means since

Numbers 19:22 might actually be referring to things touched by the one doing the sprinkling, not the one being sprinkled who was defiled due to a dead body.

- Note the Messianic connection of water coming out of the rock and how we receive the Set-Apart Spirit, peace, and righteousness through Messiah (see below verses).

- A brother in prison (who was since released from prison) shared this thought: Mosheh struck the rock the first time and water came out, but the second time he was commanded to "speak" to the rock; **יהושע** was struck the first time He came, but when He comes the second time, we will speak with/to Him.

Related Verses

Mosheh Striking Rock: Psalms 106:32-33
Water From The Rock Related To Peace, Righteousness, & The Set-Apart Spirit Which We Are Able To Receive Through Messiah: Judges 15:19, Psalms 36:7-10, 78:15-16, 35, 105:41, 114:8, Isaiah 44:3, 48:18-22, 66:12, Nehemiah 9:15, 20, Amos 5:24, Mark 1:8, John 3:5, 1 Corinthians 10:4, 1 John 5:5-15, Revelation 22:17
Passover Law When Defiled By Dead Body: Numbers 9
Sacrificing the Passover & Eating Contrary to What is Written: 2 Chronicles 30
Prophesy of Sprinkling of Clean Water For Cleansing: Ezekiel 36:25