

## Week 6—Numbers 19

Begin each day of your study by asking the LORD to speak to you through His Word.

### *Day 1*

1. Read Numbers 19:1-22. Take your time and make notes below about what you notice, questions you have, and what stands out to you.

### *Day 2*

1. Read Numbers 19:1-10. Now read Leviticus 1:3-9 and describe the normal sacrifice that must take place for sin. What makes this one in Numbers 19 different? Why might that be?

**Red Heifer**—According to the NIV Study Bible, “While the words “without defect or blemish,” are familiar to sacrificial language, this particular animal is not familiar. This is a cow, not an ox; it is to be slaughtered, not sacrificed; and it is to be killed outside the camp, not at the holy altar. The ashes are the primary focus of this act, for they will be used in the ritual of water of cleansing. The burning of the animal with its “blood and intestines” (v. 5) is unprecedented in the Old Testament.”

2. This whole ritual was to create water for purification. Describe how this water is made. Why all the red (i.e. heifer, cedar wood, scarlet thread)? What lesson is God teaching them about sin? Why did it take place outside the camp in your opinion?

**Purify themselves with water**—The ashes from the red heifer were kept outside the camp and would be mixed as needed with water to provide a means of cleansing after contact with dead bodies.

3. Why is it relevant that the people doing the sacrifice were defiled?

### *Day 3*

1. Read Numbers 19:1-10. Why do God's people need a priest to atone for their sins? Did it work permanently? Why or why not? Is there a difference between sin and sins? If so, what is it?

2. Read Hebrews 9:11-14. This passage is a direct reference to Numbers 19, what does it say? What did Jesus' sacrifice accomplish? Did it work permanently? In what way?

3. If Jesus' sacrifice cleansed us permanently, why do we still sin? What do we do with that sin? What does 1 John 1:8-9 say about this? Why is confessing sins still important even if we have been cleansed by Jesus?

#### *Day 4*

1. Read Numbers 19:11-22. Why is the stain death such a serious thing to the Lord? Why does it "defile" a person to be near it? What does Habakkuk 1:13 and Isaiah 6:3-5 say about this? Now read 2 Corinthians 5:21 and note what this says? How does that make you feel?

2. Why would a person who did not cleanse themselves be "cut off from the community" (v. 20)? How might this relate to Jesus and the New Testament?

3. When these rituals of cleansing are not observed, what becomes defiled by the lack of cleansing (13, 20)? What does this teach us today in light of 1 Corinthians 6:19-20?

**Defile the LORD's Tabernacle**—I find it remarkable that the neglect of a person to follow the provision for cleansing not only brings judgment on them but also pollutes the tabernacle itself!

## Day 5

1. Read Numbers 19:17-22. What was the effect of the water on a person? How does Numbers 8:5-7 relate to this? Did the water itself cleanse a person or did it symbolize something else? What claim does Jesus make about it in John 4:7-14?

**Fresh water**—The words for “fresh water” can also be translated as “living water” because it would make that person “clean” again after being in death’s presence.

2. What is the symbol of our purification today? What do the following verses say about it?

Mark 16:16—

Acts 2:38—

Acts 22:16—

3. Have you been baptized? If so, what does it mean to you still today? If not, what is keeping you?

4. After studying this passage this week, how would you answer someone who asked what Numbers 19 has to do with us today?

### *Conclusion*

1. What most stood out to you as you studied Numbers 19 this week? *Why* do you think this was the case?

2. What is the Holy Spirit prompting you to *do* as a result of this? Be prepared to share with your group!