

Numbers 19-20

November 20, 2011

19:1-22 Who can give us a general overview of what we learn in Numbers 19:1-22?

- The Jews were to kill and burn a red heifer. The ashes were to be kept outside of the camp. Those ashes were mixed with water to “cleanse” people and things that had been in contact with a dead person.

Why do you think that such a big deal was made out of touching the dead?

- Death is the greatest defilement of all because it is the final result of sin. See Genesis 2:17. See Romans 3:23 & 6:23. See James 1:13-15.

Did Adam and Eve die as a result of their sin? Did they die that “day”?

- They did indeed eventually die physically. In physical death the soul is separated from the body. See 2 Corinthians 5:1-10. When a Christian dies his body remains here but his soul goes to be with the Lord. See 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. Notice here that the souls of the saved (those “asleep” – vs. 14) are with the Lord and return with Him to be reunited with their bodies (vs. 16).
- Adam and Eve died *spiritually* when they sinned. Spiritual death is the separation of the soul from God. When the soul is separated from God, the person is dead in trespasses and sin. See Ephesians 2:1-3. See Romans 5:12-21. In the first Adam all became sinners; through the second Adam, Jesus, all can be made righteous. Death came through Adam; life came through Jesus. Condemnation came through Adam; forgiveness came through Jesus.

Is the red heifer connected to the New Testament in any way?

- The red heifer is a picture or “type” of Christ. He is the one who dies so that we can be cleansed. The burning is a picture of Him paying sin’s penalty by suffering hell for us. Because of His death, we can be cleansed. See the following passages: Ephesians 5:25-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; & Titus 3:5. Jesus is the Living Word. See John 1:1-4 & 14-18. The Bible is the Written Word.

Who can think of other pictures or “types” of Christ in the Old Testament besides Adam and the red heifer?

- The Ark was Jesus rescuing men from God’s wrath. Isaac was Jesus trusting his father Abraham (a picture of God the Father) who was willing to be a sacrifice. Joseph was a Savior of Israel. Moses delivered Israel from the bondage of slavery (theirs was physical bondage ours was spiritual bondage). The blood of the lamb of atonement satisfied and appeased the wrath of God. The “scapegoat” carried away the sin of the people. We have another type coming up in chapter 20 of Numbers.

19:13,20 What do we learn in verses 13 and 20?

- If they were not cleansed by the washing of the heifer’s ashes, then they were unclean and cut off from God and His people. People today who are not cleansed by the blood of Christ are eventually cut off from God (hell). See Isaiah 1:18 and Revelation 7:13-14.

The Jewish writings teach that up until the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 A.D., ashes had been prepared from a total of only nine red heifers. Moses himself processed the very first red heifer. The prophet Ezra did the second in the days of the First Temple, and during the entire era of the Second Temple only seven more heifers were used for ashes. This was enough to provide for the nation's needs for purification throughout all those years. They believe that the Messiah will prepare the Tenth Red Heifer. We know now that the Messiah (Jesus) was a fulfillment of the red heifer.

20:1-13 Who can tell us what takes place in chapter 20 verses 1 to 13?

- **Miriam** dies and is buried. At Kadesh (*KAY-desh*) there is no water and the people complain to Moses and Aaron. Moses meets with God who tells him to take the “rod”, speak to the rock, and bring forth water for the people and their animals. Moses instead strikes the rock (as he did at Horeb – Exodus 17:5-6) and God tells him that he and Aaron will not lead the people into the Promised Land.

20:8-9 What is the “rod” that Moses used?

- It was the same rod or staff that he used to work the miracles in Egypt ([Exodus 4:17](#)). It was the rod that represented Moses, Aaron, and the Levites that “budded” when the people challenged their authority ([Numbers 17:1-11](#)). Compare [Numbers 17:10](#) and [20:9](#).

20:8,11 What do you notice about the rock in verses 8 and 11?

- This was not “a” rock; it was “the” rock. See Exodus 17:6 and 1 Corinthians 10:4. Notice that this rock “followed” them in the desert.

20:13-22 What takes place in verses 13 to 22?

- Moses seeks permission to travel through the land of Edom. Edom refuses permission and brings its army out to prevent passage. God leads the people to avoid the battle and they travel the long way around Edom.

20:21 “Israel turned away” in verse 21. Is there any wisdom that we can learn here?

- Every battle is not worth fighting. Some people fight and argue over everything. Very few battles are worth fighting. Not getting our “way” is not the end of the world as we know it. It is possible to win the battle and lose the war. A husband or wife may “run over” his or her mate and win every argument but then lose the war when their spouse walks out. Sometimes the “fight” will cost you far more than winning it will get you. Choose your battles carefully.