



SERIES:	04 Numbers - 2013
MESSAGE:	Numbers 18:21-19:22
SPEAKER:	Skip Heitzig
SCRIPTURE:	Numbers 18:21-19:22

MESSAGE SUMMARY

In this study of Numbers, we continue to look into the duties of the Levitical priests and learn about the laws of purification. As we partake in Communion, we see how this text points to Christ and learn how He has fulfilled the Law.

DETAILED NOTES

I. Introduction

- A. The new covenant of Christ is based upon the old covenant promises that the Messiah would come
 - 1. Communion is based on Passover, or *pesach* in Hebrew
 - 2. Passover involved the breaking of bread and drinking of wine
 - 3. Jesus took the element that His Jewish disciples understood and made the utmost significance out of it
 - 4. Luke 22:19
- B. We need to know what the old covenant says because so much of the New Testament is based upon it
- C. The Torah, or *Tanakh* in Hebrew
 - 1. Genesis is the book of beginnings and wonder
 - 2. Exodus is the book of witness, redemption, and revelation
 - 3. Leviticus is the book of worship: the way to God through sacrifice and the walk with God through sanctification
 - 4. Numbers is the book of wandering
 - a. Almost forty years total
 - b. "How to turn a two-week trip into a forty-year trial"; Deuteronomy 1:2
 - c. The chronology of these forty years isn't all written down
 - d. Numbers 16-19 is all about the priesthood and its validation

II. Numbers 18:21-32

- A. Hebrews 5:4
- B. Genesis 34—the iniquity of the tribe of Levi
 - 1. Dinah, daughter of Jacob, violated by Shechem
 - 2. Levi and Simeon kill all of the males in the city of Shechem
 - 3. Jacob speaks on his deathbed: Genesis 49:5-7
 - 4. Consequently, the tribes of Simeon and Levi become two of the smallest and least significant in the nation
- C. The gold calf incident (see Exodus 32)

1. Moses draws a line and says, "Whoever is on the Lord's side—come to me!" (v. 26)
 2. The tribe of Levi immediately goes to him
 3. The Lord makes them the priestly tribe
- D. Tithing predated the Law
1. See Genesis 14
 2. New Testament says Jesus has a higher priesthood than Aaron—His goes back all the way to Melchizedek, to whom even Abraham gave tithes
- E. Tithing in Numbers 18:24-29
1. Something's askew if a church staff does not tithe
 2. It's like they're saying, "You should trust the Lord with your finances; but we're not willing to trust the Lord with *our* finances"
 3. Main idea of a tithe: It all belongs to God, and you are recognizing that He allows you to keep ninety percent of what you make and give ten percent to Him
 4. Even the Levites who received Israel's tithe were to tithe
- F. New Testament tithing: 2 Corinthians 9:7
- G. The Levites could eat the offerings and first fruits/firstborn animals that were brought
- III. Numbers 19:1-13
- A. Law of the red heifer—singularly given while the Israelites are wandering in the wilderness
- B. Deals with the ritualistic cleansing of people who become defiled by touching a dead body
1. This was *the* issue during these years of wandering in the wilderness
 2. God had promised the land to the younger generation; the older generation would all die off
 3. Numbers 17:12-13
 4. Conservatively, there were 2-3 million Israelites
 - a. If the older generation was 1.2 million people, there would be on average eighty-five funerals a day, seven funerals per hour over the forty years of wandering
 - b. God also plagued the people, etc.
- C. The sacrifice of the red heifer
1. A female cow older than a calf
 2. Female = bearer of life
 3. Red = blood; it must be perfect in its redness
 4. Jesus, too, was killed outside the camp/city (see John 19:16-17)
 5. Cedar wood = not as subject to decay as other woods
 6. Hyssop
 - a. Used to apply blood to the lintels and doorposts on Passover (see Exodus 12:22)
 - b. Speaks of purgation and cleansing; Psalm 51
 - c. Jesus on the cross given hyssop dipped in a drink (see John 19:29)
 7. Scarlet = blood and life
 8. According to tradition, some of the ashes of the very first sacrificed red heifer were added to the ashes of every sacrificed heifer since, so that there was always some of the elements of the very first red heifer in the ashes
 - a. This continued until the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed in A.D. 70

- b. Rabbinical teachings said these ashes mixed with purifying water would inaugurate each new priest into the priesthood
 - c. Temple Institute
 - d. Asher Kaufman
 - D. Numbers 19:11-12: If you don't go the way God has prescribed, you won't be cleansed
 - E. How does this apply to a New Testament believer?
 - 1. Symbolism of these instructions: life, life perpetuated, out of death comes life, life must be sacrificed for life to continue, etc.
 - 2. This is a special cleansing for a certain kind of defilement: death
 - 3. Jesus Christ died once for all, one sacrifice for all of time
 - 4. However, as we walk through this world, we touch "dead" things—people, movies, music, lifestyles—and become defiled and need cleansing
 - 5. John 13:5-11
 - a. "He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet" (v. 10)
 - b. You need this kind of cleansing as you walk through the world—but you don't need to keep getting saved!
- IV. Numbers 19:14-22
- A. An open container is defiled; a closed one is protected
 - 1. The Bible says we are vessels, clay pots (see 2 Corinthians 4:7)
 - 2. If you as a vessel are too open-minded in this world, you will become defiled by the death that's in the world
 - 3. You should be honored to be considered close-minded
 - 4. Be careful about being too open-minded
 - B. Moses was a great mediator, but he wasn't good enough
 - 1. Aaron was a great priest, but he couldn't take away the people's sins—he could only cover them up
 - 2. Hebrews 9:11-15
 - C. All the sacrifices of the Old Testament point to the cross
- V. Closing
- A. The bloodiness of Christianity bothers some people
 - B. But the blood of Jesus is necessary for atonement of sins—we are not good enough (see Isaiah 64:6)
 - C. God took care of the problem we could never take care of by sending His Son to be killed once for all
 - D. What do we have to do? Believe that what He did was enough
 - E. Do you want to see God's love for us?
 - 1. Look at His wounds from the cross
 - 2. Pilate: "Behold the Man!" (see John 19:5)
 - 3. John: "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!" (see 1 John 3:1)

Figures referenced: Temple Institute, Asher Kaufman

Greek/Hebrew words: *pesach*, *Tanakh*

Cross references: Genesis 14; 34; 49:5-7, Exodus 12:22; 32, Numbers 16-19; 17:12-13; 18:21-19:22, Deuteronomy 1:2, Psalm 51, Isaiah 64:6, Luke 22:19, John 13:5-11; 19:5, 16-17, 29, 2 Corinthians 4:7; 9:7, Hebrews 5:4; 9:11-15, 1 John 3:1

Topic: Purification

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