

Sacrifice of the Red Heifer

Numbers 19

| Group ¹ | C | V | Description |
|-----------------------------|----|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ordinance of the Red Heifer | 19 | 1-10 | The process of sacrifice and disposal and use of the ashes for purification |
| | | 11-13 | Purification of one who touches a corpse of a person |
| | | 14-19 | ↳ What kinds of human remains cause uncleanness of persons or items and the process for purification |
| | | 20-22 | Unclean persons who do not purify himself is to be cutoff perpetually |

Reflections

This is one of those chapters which seems a little strange to our present day culture. But consider what the Lord proclaimed through the prophet Isaiah.

Isaiah 55:6-13 NASB Seek the LORD while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near. **7** Let the wicked forsake his way And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the LORD, And He will have compassion on him, And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon. **8** "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD. **9** "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts. **10** "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, And do not return there without watering the earth And making it bear and sprout, And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; **11** So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding *in the matter* for which I sent it. **12** "For you will go out with joy And be led forth with peace; The mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you, And all the trees of the field will clap *their* hands. **13** "Instead of the thorn bush the cypress will come up, And instead of the nettle the myrtle will come up, And it will be a memorial to the LORD, For an everlasting sign which will not be cut off."

Sometimes God uses rituals to teach us obedience. It is not so much the ritual but our attitude. Just like Peter wrote about baptism.

1 Peter 3:21-22 NASB Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, **22** who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.

Similarly, Paul wrote in Romans that in baptism we identify with Christ's death, burial and resurrection.

Romans 6:3-14 NASB Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? **4** Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. **5** For if we have become united with *Him* in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be *in the likeness* of His resurrection, **6** knowing this, that our old self was crucified with *Him*, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; **7** for he who has died is freed from sin. **8** Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, **9** knowing that Christ, having been raised

¹ (NASB) "Group" column from the headings in the NASB text.

Sacrifice of the Red Heifer

from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. **10** For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. **11** Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. **12** Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts, **13** and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin *as instruments of unrighteousness*; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members *as instruments of righteousness to God*. **14** For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

If our focus on performing the ritual and not living to honor the One who instituted the ritual, it is simply that, a ritual. It has no meaning. It is only when we set our eyes, minds, and hearts on God and the salvation we have obtained through faith in His Son Jesus that the ritual takes on true meaning and has a lasting effect on our eternal soul.

Also remember, Jesus was the final, once for all sacrifice necessary to make us clean before God. Consider what Jesus taught about cleanness and uncleanness.

Matthew 15:11 NASB "It is not what enters into the mouth *that defiles the man, but what proceeds out of the mouth, this defiles the man.*"

Mark 7:20 NASB And He was saying, "**That which proceeds out of the man, that is what defiles the man.**"

There and Then: Here and Now

Answer the questions below as you reflect on your own life and this part of our study*: *my LOG vs others SPECK. Here are some possible responses I've identified from the text that might apply to anyone.*

S - Are there *sins* for me to avoid or confess?

•

P - Are there *promises* from God for me to claim?

•

E - Are there *examples* for me to follow or avoid?

•

C - Are there *commands* for me to obey?

•

K - How has this passage increased my *knowledge* about God / Jesus / Holy Spirit?

•

Key Words: Old Testament, Torah/Pentateuch, Numbers, Red Heifer, Sacrifice, Clean and Unclean



This work by James Swanson is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License](#). Originally published at studythebook.org on August 1, 2016.

Bibliography

(NASB) *New American Standard Bible*. La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995. Print.

* *Navigator Bible Study Handbook* (with additions) & Matthew 7:1-5.

Sacrifice of the Red Heifer