

# The Book of Numbers

## Lesson 9

### *Chapters 17 - 19*

The challenge to Moses' authority was always lingering in the camp even from the time of the Red Sea crossing. After the Golden Calf event, the camp settled down and followed Moses' instructions throughout the construction of the Tabernacle complex and its dedication as well as the ordination of Aaron and his sons as priests. One month after all of that was completed, the camp set out for the Promised Land. On the road again, the camp began to doubt Moses' authority and the grumbling and rebellion increased until it was out of control. Within just a few days, the LORD had killed enough of the camp that the count was under 600,000 fighting men over the age of 20. A couple of months later with the rebellion of Korah, 250 elders who challenged the authority of Aaron and his direct family as the only true priestly order were burnt to death by the LORD. On that same day, the earth opened up and swallowed all the supporters of Dathan and Abiram in the Reubenite camp. That number we do not know. Then on the following day, the rebellion continued, and the LORD sent a plague that killed 14,700. The doubt was still present. The LORD needed to intervene one more time with a humanly impossible miracle to settle for all time the authority of Aaron and his sons as the priestly line of Israel. What can the LORD do that will clearly communicate His desires? The Red Sea ought to have been enough. The water from the rock should have been too. The earthquakes that swallowed the Golden Calf and the family of Dathan and Abiram should have been enough. Perhaps Miriam's leprosy and healing? How about that miracle? It seems that the plague on the 14,700 would have sufficed. The big things were not enough! So, the LORD used something simple, something they all used, something they all had. Rods.

### **Twelve Rods – One to Sprout**

**Num 17:1** Then **the LORD spoke to Moses**, saying, **17:2** "Speak to the sons of Israel, and get from them a rod for each father's household: twelve rods, from all their leaders according to their fathers' households. You shall write each name on his rod, **17:3** and write Aaron's name on the rod of Levi; for there is one rod for the head *of each* of their fathers' households. **17:4** "You shall then deposit them in the tent of meeting in front of the testimony, where I meet with you. **17:5** "It will come about that the rod of the man whom I choose will sprout. Thus I will lessen from upon Myself the grumbings of the sons of Israel, who are grumbling against you." **17:6** Moses therefore spoke to the sons of Israel, and all their leaders gave him a rod apiece, for each leader according to their fathers' households, twelve rods, with the rod of Aaron among their rods. **17:7** So Moses deposited the rods before the LORD in the tent of the testimony. **17:8** Now on the next day Moses went into the tent of the testimony; and behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi had sprouted and put forth buds and produced blossoms, and it bore ripe almonds. **17:9** Moses then brought out all the rods from the presence of the LORD to all the sons of Israel; and they looked, and each man took his rod. **17:10** But the LORD said to Moses, "Put back the rod of Aaron before the testimony to be kept as a sign against the rebels,

that you may put an end to their grumblings against Me, so that they will not die."  
17:11 Thus Moses did; just as the LORD had commanded him, so he did.

Twelve rods were collected. These were the shepherds' staffs that they were famous for carrying. Hardly a man would ever have been seen without one. Only twelve were selected, but there were really thirteen tribal units in the congregation. Manasseh and Ephraim were two tribes who stood for the double blessing of Joseph. Manasseh took Joseph's portion and Ephraim took the Levite portion and the Levites did not have a portion. But here, a rod was taken from the Levites. Therefore, Manasseh and Ephraim must have offered one rod in the name of Joseph. Aaron's name was written on Levi's rod. They presented twelve rods to the LORD for Him to choose from. That rod would belong to the man who was God's chosen authority in the priesthood. On the next morning eleven of the rods were still just dead wood, but Aaron's rod blossomed, showing life! It was the rod selected by the LORD. He was the priest of all. The high priest of all. No longer was the patriarch of each family the priest. All offerings were to go through Aaron and his descendants and no one else.

### **Fear of Death**

17:12 Then the sons of Israel spoke to Moses, saying, "Behold, we perish, we are dying, we are all dying! 17:13 "Everyone who comes near, who comes near to the tabernacle of the LORD, must die. Are we to perish completely?"

Finally, the men of the congregation knew their places in the new order of worship. It brought great fear to them, even a fear unto death! It was time for the LORD to repeat His plan to the congregation and specifically His plan for the Levites. That He would do!

### **Instructions Reiterated - Aaron and Sons Bear Guilt**

Num 18:1 So the LORD said to Aaron, "You and your sons and your father's household with you shall bear the guilt in connection with the sanctuary, and you and your sons with you shall bear the guilt in connection with your priesthood.

The camp of Israel had been put in its place by the LORD. It had rejected Him; yet, He had not rejected it. He had every right to do so! He had every reason to wipe it from the face of the earth. But He had a plan for it! A plan that would lead to the appearance of the Eternal Savior. A family, a normal family, with all its convoluted members, yet, with a holy line that would keep the commands faithfully as best they could. Interestingly, the line would not have been from Levite's or Aaron's descendants, it would be from the lead tribe of the camp. The tribe that followed the cloud by day and the fire by night as they moved, the tribe whose position was directly east of the Tabernacle Complex entry, the tribe of Judah. But that will occur many years later. For now, nothing will change in the original instructions given at the dedication of the Tabernacle Complex just months before this time in the story. The LORD spoke to Aaron, in the presence of Moses and the whole congregation. Aaron and his sons would be the priests and would "bear the guilt in connection with the sanctuary ... [and] with your priesthood." What does that mean? It means that the priesthood would be answerable to the LORD for all the legal

rebellion against the LORD that would occur among the Israelites but they also would be responsible for the atonement of their sins that would lead to forgiveness.

### **Instructions Reiterated - Levites to Help Aaron and Sons (The Priests)**

<sup>18:2</sup> "But bring with you also your brothers, the tribe of Levi, the tribe of your father, that they may be joined with you and serve you, while you and your sons with you are before the tent of the testimony. <sup>18:3</sup> "And they shall thus attend to your obligation and the obligation of all the tent, but they shall not come near to the furnishings of the sanctuary and the altar, or both they and you will die. <sup>18:4</sup> "They shall be joined with you and attend to the obligations of the tent of meeting, for all the service of the tent; but an outsider may not come near you. <sup>18:5</sup> "So you shall attend to the obligations of the sanctuary and the obligations of the altar, so that there will no longer be wrath on the sons of Israel.

Nothing has changed here from the original announcement concerning the Levites and their ministerial service with the priests. They will be the helpers. The LORD speaks about the obligation of the Levites but He also draws the line for them at the entrance to the door of the Tabernacle, at the entrance to the Holy Place where the most holy furniture of the LORD was. Death would be their penalty if they crossed that line. They were still responsible for moving the most holy items once the priests had wrapped them, but they were not to look upon them unwrapped. They were also to break down, move and set back up the Tabernacle and the complex fencing once the holiest items were wrapped and removed. The other twelve tribes were not to take part in that process. The wrath of the LORD would be the penalty if they tried.

### **Instructions Reiterated - Announcements to Levites**

<sup>18:6</sup> "Behold, I Myself have taken your fellow Levites from among the sons of Israel; they are a gift to you, dedicated to the LORD, to perform the service for the tent of meeting. <sup>18:7</sup> "But you and your sons with you shall attend to your priesthood for everything concerning the altar and inside the veil, and you are to perform service. I am giving you the priesthood as a bestowed service, but the outsider who comes near shall be put to death."

The priests could not physically do all the work for the whole nation; therefore, the LORD gave them the tribe of Levi as a gift to help. Here the warnings of the limits of the Levi are reiterated; outside the Tabernacle they could work, inside they could not. Death awaited if they entered where the Altar of Incense and the Veil that shielded the Ark of the Covenant stood.

### **Instructions Reiterated - Aaron In Charge of Offerings**

<sup>18:8</sup> Then the LORD spoke to Aaron, "Now behold, I Myself have given you charge of My offerings, even all the holy gifts of the sons of Israel I have given them to you as a portion and to your sons as a perpetual allotment.

The LORD continues to speak with Aaron in the presence of all. We do not have one instance of the LORD speaking to Aaron privately as the LORD did with Moses. The offerings of the congregation were the responsibility of Aaron and his descendants. Not only were they

responsible for the offerings, they were also to treat them as if they belonged to Aaron and his descendants personally. They were the earthly caretakers of the LORD's heavenly requirement.

### **Instructions Reiterated - Grain, Sin and Guilt**

**18:9** "This shall be yours from the most holy *gifts reserved* from the fire; every offering of theirs, even every grain offering and every sin offering and every guilt offering, which they shall render to Me, shall be most holy for you and for your sons. **18:10** "As the most holy *gifts* you shall eat it; every male shall eat it. It shall be holy to you.

Here we see clearly defined the final purpose of all the sacrificed animals that were required by the LORD. They were to be food for the religious authorities that the LORD designated to do the work in the Tabernacle Complex. The offerings were holy and they were holy food for the priests and the Levites.

### **Instructions Reiterated - Wave, Oil, Wine, First Fruits, Devoted Things**

**18:11** "This also is yours, the offering of their gift, even all the wave offerings of the sons of Israel; I have given them to you and to your sons and daughters with you as a perpetual allotment. Everyone of your household who is clean may eat it. **18:12** "All the best of the fresh oil and all the best of the fresh wine and of the grain, the first fruits of those which they give to the LORD, I give them to you. **18:13** "The first ripe fruits of all that is in their land, which they bring to the LORD, shall be yours; everyone of your household who is clean may eat it. **18:14** "Every devoted thing in Israel shall be yours.

All the offerings of the people went to feed the priests, the Levites and their families. Here we see two important restrictions. First, the household members must be "clean." We need not explain what that means now; the LORD will explain it in chapter 19. Second, the offerings must be "devoted." The first offspring of every female animal in the care of the Israelites was to belong to the LORD. If it was a clean animal, it was to be brought to the LORD for a sacrifice; if it was an unclean animal, it was to be redeemed with a set price. The redemption was to be brought to the priests at the Tabernacle. The first fruits, the first 10% of all the offerings of grain, oil, wine, etc. were also to be brought to the Tabernacle for the use of the priests. Through this process, the priests and Levites had all the food sources they needed for their families. All the offerings were part of the holy things "devoted" to the LORD.

### **Instructions Reiterated - Offerings That Must Be Redeemed**

**18:15** "Every first issue of the womb of all flesh, whether man or animal, which they offer to the LORD, shall be yours; nevertheless the firstborn of man you shall surely redeem, and the firstborn of unclean animals you shall redeem. **18:16** "As to their redemption price, from a month old you shall redeem them, by your valuation, five shekels in silver, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, which is twenty gerahs.

Even the firstborn human and beast were to be devoted to the LORD. The clean animals were offered as sacrifices but the human children and the unclean animals were redeemed. That

means that a price was paid for them and they were not sacrificed. Here the LORD sets the redemption price of five shekels of silver.

### Instructions Reiterated - Offerings That Must Not Be Redeemed

**18:17** "But the firstborn of an ox or the firstborn of a sheep or the firstborn of a goat, you shall not redeem; they are holy. You shall sprinkle their blood on the altar and shall offer up their fat in smoke *as* an offering by fire, for a soothing aroma to the LORD.

**18:18** "Their meat shall be yours; it shall be yours like the breast of a wave offering and like the right thigh. **18:19** "All the offerings of the holy *gifts*, which the sons of Israel offer to the LORD, I have given to you and your sons and your daughters with you, as a perpetual allotment. It is an everlasting covenant of salt before the LORD to you and your descendants with you."

Just to make sure the people understood the LORD's law, He reiterates which animals could not be redeemed with a price, the ones that were clean, the ones that must be given to the priest and Levites for their use and sacrifice. They were the firstborn ox, sheep and goat. They belonged to the LORD and were to be put in the care for the priests.

Notice the interesting statement by the LORD that bears investigation. **"It is an everlasting covenant of salt before the LORD to you and your descendants with you."** "Covenant of salt!" What does that mean? More than that, what sense does it make in this context? The Hebrew word is *melach* and it clearly means *salt*. That Hebrew word is always translated *salt* and nothing else in Scripture. It must mean what it means! Salt. It is attached to the word "covenant" or the Hebrew word *berith*. This word is translated "covenant" 99% of the time in the Scripture but it is also sporadically translated as *allied*, *allies*, *league* or *treaty* in the Bible. By looking at all the possible definitions, we see a commonality of meaning among them. They all describe a relationship in some form or fashion. We know nothing more with this discovery than we knew at first. A "relationship with salt" does not clear up the meaning for us. Now we must look at the customs for an answer. In that part of the world, in that time, as in the rest of the world and even today, salt was and is used for preserving food indefinitely. Curing food. Salt is antibacterial which means that no bacteria can attack food which is soaked in a salty solution and cause it to rot or putrefy. Salt was seen as the one thing in the world that would stop the permanence of corruptibility of the flesh of food. It therefore became the symbol of incorruptibility. Furthermore, anything cured by salt was considered permanent until it was soaked in water to flush the salt away and cooked for consumption. It could be stored or carried for years in packs without fear of sickness when consumed. Now we have an understanding; the term "everlasting covenant of salt" must be a metaphor for the permanent relationship between the offering of the people as a gift to the LORD. It was a permanent requirement, as permanent as salt which cannot lose its savor.

### Instructions Reiterated - Aaron Not To Own Land

**18:20** Then the LORD said to Aaron, "You shall have no inheritance in their land nor own any portion among them; I am your portion and your inheritance among the sons of Israel.

This news was not new. The land was divided among the twelve tribes excluding the Levites. In this passage, the LORD is not addressing the Levites, only Aaron and his descendants. The exclusive right to serve the LORD was all the inheritance Aaron and his offspring would have.

### **Instructions Reiterated - Levites to Inherit Tithes**

<sup>18:21</sup> "To the sons of Levi, behold, I have given all the tithe in Israel for an inheritance, in return for their service which they perform, the service of the tent of meeting.

Here the LORD addresses the Levites. They were not allowed to serve the LORD directly, their service had to be in the help they gave the priestly line. Furthermore, they, too, would not receive plots in the Promised Land. Their gift would be the tithes of the twelve tribes as they were brought to the Sanctuary. Therefore, the tribes would bring their tithes to the Tabernacle Complex as an offering. Those tithes would become the inheritance of the Levites.

### **Instructions Reiterated - Tent of Meeting off Limits to Sons of Israel**

<sup>18:22</sup> "The sons of Israel shall not come near the tent of meeting again, or they will bear sin and die. <sup>18:23</sup> "Only the Levites shall perform the service of the tent of meeting, and they shall bear their iniquity; it shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations, and among the sons of Israel they shall have no inheritance. <sup>18:24</sup> "For the tithe of the sons of Israel, which they offer as an offering to the LORD, I have given to the Levites for an inheritance; therefore I have said concerning them, "They shall have no inheritance among the sons of Israel."

As the twelve tribes brought their tithes to the Tabernacle Complex, care had to be taken that they did not get too close to the tent of meeting and get in the way of the work being done there by the Levites. Too close would be considered sin and the penalty would be death!

### **Instructions Reiterated - Levites Must Tithe on the Tithe**

<sup>18:25</sup> Then **the LORD spoke to Moses**, saying, <sup>18:26</sup> "Moreover, you shall speak to the Levites and say to them, 'When you take from the sons of Israel the tithe which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then you shall present an offering from it to the LORD, a tithe of the tithe. <sup>18:27</sup> 'Your offering shall be reckoned to you as the grain from the threshing floor or the full produce from the wine vat. <sup>18:28</sup> 'So you shall also present an offering to the LORD from your tithes, which you receive from the sons of Israel; and from it you shall give the LORD'S offering to Aaron the priest. <sup>18:29</sup> 'Out of all your gifts you shall present every offering due to the LORD, from all the best of them, the sacred part from them.' <sup>18:30</sup> "You shall say to them, 'When you have offered from it the best of it, then *the rest* shall be reckoned to the Levites as the product of the threshing floor, and as the product of the wine vat. <sup>18:31</sup> 'You may eat it anywhere, you and your households, for it is your compensation in return for your service in the tent of meeting. <sup>18:32</sup> 'You will bear no sin by reason of it when you have offered the best of it. But you shall not profane the sacred gifts of the sons of Israel, or you will die.'"

The twelve tribes inherited land, the Levites inherited the tithe instead of land. But the tithe was in place of the land and the Levites had to tithe off the tithe they received. It was no different



from a minister today receiving a salary from the tithes of the people and then being required by the LORD to give a tithe back to the Church. The twelve tribes were to bring the best 10 % of their gains each year to the Tabernacle (or as the birthing and harvest seasons occurred). One hundred percent of that offering became the property of the Levites. Then, the Levites would select the best 10% of the 100% they received and give it to the Tabernacle. That tithe became the property of the priests. The 90% left over was divided among the Levites as a salary to provide for their families.

### Something New - The First Red Heifer Ceremony

**Num 19:1** Then **the LORD spoke to Moses** and Aaron, saying, **19:2** "This is the statute of the law which the LORD has commanded, saying, 'Speak to the sons of Israel that they bring you an unblemished red heifer in which is no defect *and* on which a yoke has never been placed.

For the first time in the Scripture, we hear of the red heifer. The Israelites were just about two years out of Egypt when this new instruction was given. An “unblemished red heifer ... no defect ... on which a yoke has never been placed” was to be selected. We have absolutely no idea how this red heifer was selected, which tribe it came from, how old it was, how big it was. Some commentators hold that the sacrifice of this red heifer was in deference to the esteem placed on the animal by the Egyptians. The sacrifice of a heifer in Egypt was considered the highest worship of the evil demon Typhon. This view is only speculative, and we can give no credence to it.

### Red Heifer Given to Eleazar to Slaughtered and Burned

**19:3** 'You shall give it to Eleazar the priest, and it shall be brought outside the camp and be slaughtered in his presence. **19:4** 'Next Eleazar the priest shall take some of its blood with his finger and sprinkle some of its blood toward the front of the tent of meeting seven times. **19:5** 'Then the heifer shall be burned in his sight; its hide and its flesh and its blood, with its refuse, shall be burned. **19:6** 'The priest shall take cedar wood and hyssop and scarlet *material* and cast it into the midst of the burning heifer.

The heifer was killed and burned completely with the added ingredients of cedar, hyssop and scarlet fabric. We know about cedar and scarlet fabric, but the hyssop is a mystery to this day. We simply do not know which plant it was. What we can assume is that the mature hyssop had stems that were sturdy and grew to be two to four feet long. The uncut end would have some kind of head that would allow something like a sponge to be placed on it, as in the case where hyssop was used with the sponge to offer our LORD a drink while He was dying on the cross. However, several plants in that area of the world could be considered the hyssop plant because they had the same characteristics and capabilities. Whichever plant it was, stalks of it were thrown into the fire with the heifer, cedar and fabric.

### Eleazar Unclean

**19:7** 'The priest shall then wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward come into the camp, but the priest shall be unclean until evening. **19:8** 'The one who burns

it shall also wash his clothes in water and bathe his body in water, and shall be unclean until evening. <sup>19:9</sup> 'Now a man who is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer and deposit them outside the camp in a clean place, and the congregation of the sons of Israel shall keep it as water to remove impurity; it is purification from sin. <sup>19:10</sup> 'The one who gathers the ashes of the heifer shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening; and it shall be a perpetual statute to the sons of Israel and to the alien who sojourns among them.

Notice that Eleazar did not actually perform the burning of the red heifer; it was burned under his watchful eye. Still, Eleazar was unclean and all his clothing had to be washed and he would not be considered clean, even after a bath until the evening which in that day was the afternoon, after the sun passed the apex at noon and began to descend.

The one who had the honor of burning the heifer was also unclean and was required to follow the same routine after he gathered the ashes. Notice that the text says, “and it shall be a perpetual statute to the sons of Israel and to the alien who sojourns among them.” That line indicates that the ceremony needed to be repeated with the high priest and the burning of a red heifer throughout the perpetual journey of the nation of Israel and was to be a statute for all generations.

In verse 9 we see the instruction, “**Now a man who is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer and deposit them outside the camp in a clean place.**” These ashes were not to be brought into the camp but were kept outside the camp in a clean place. We do not know why they were not brought into the camp. Perhaps it was because the unclean person was to go out of the camp to bathe in water that had been captured from a running source and mixed with a few ashes from the container. Standing water was not good enough to clean the unclean. Running water from a spring or stream was to be used but it was not good enough by itself; the ashes were required to make the running water adequate for the purification ceremony.

## Clean Versus Unclean

### A Corpse

<sup>19:11</sup> 'The one who touches the corpse of any person shall be unclean for seven days.

<sup>19:12</sup> 'That one shall purify himself from uncleanness with the water on the third day and on the seventh day, *and then* he will be clean; but if he does not purify himself on the third day and on the seventh day, he will not be clean. <sup>19:13</sup> 'Anyone who touches a corpse, the body of a man who has died, and does not purify himself, defiles the tabernacle of the LORD; and that person shall be cut off from Israel. Because the water for impurity was not sprinkled on him, he shall be unclean; his uncleanness is still on him.

A person became ceremonially unclean when he had touched the “corpse of any person.” The uncleanness would last for seven days. The purification process took seven days with the ashes of the red heifer and the running water to make the person ceremonially clean. It could not happen in fewer than seven days under any circumstance. The mixture of running water and ashes is called the “water for impurity.” The use of the mixture was required for anyone and



everyone as well as the personal belongings of the one who touched the corpse. The unclean person did not bathe in the water; rather, the mixture was sprinkled on the person by someone who was already ceremonially clean. Failure to go through the process after touching a corpse carried the penalty of being cast out of the camp of the nation of Israel. Not seen here, but included in the ritual, the unclean person had to remain outside the camp for the seven days of the purification process.

#### A Corpse in a Tent

**19:14** 'This is the law when a man dies in a tent: everyone who comes into the tent and everyone who is in the tent shall be unclean for seven days. **19:15** 'Every open vessel, which has no covering tied down on it, shall be unclean.

To further detail the scope of the need to take part in the purification process, the LORD took the instruction right into the tent of every Israelite in the nation of Israel. All the people lived in tents and there most would die. We must not forget that over the next thirty-eight years, the remaining men twenty years and older who rebelled against the LORD and their family members who were over the age of twenty would die in the camp of the nation of Israel in the wilderness. When the aged and sick died in their tents, the onlookers as well as everything in the tent that was not tightly covered were immediately unclean for the seven-day period. All the people needed to go through the ceremonial purification process and if they did not, they would be removed from the camp and the nation.

#### A Corpse in a Field

**19:16** 'Also, anyone who in the open field touches one who has been slain with a sword or who has died *naturally*, or a human bone or a grave, shall be unclean for seven days.

The LORD saw fit to stretch the ceremony into the future when the nation of Israel would participate in wars or come across the corpses, bones or graves. Touching a corpse, human bone or grave would make a person unclean for seven days and required the purification ceremony process.

As a side note, this law of purification with the ashes of the red heifer for seven days was the reason the Jewish leadership could not capture and kill Jesus when He made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem just six days before His death. Although they finally took Him into custody after the Passover meal, they could not execute Him. They had every right to kill Him under their current laws, but the holy days of Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were in process. The Jewish leadership were more worried about being ceremonially unclean and not being able to participate in the holy days than they were concerned about killing Jesus. Yet, Jesus was an immediate threat to them and they needed to seize the opportunity that week. They sent Jesus to their Edomite King, Herod. Herod had sworn and vowed to uphold the Jewish laws but he was not of Jewish blood. He too would be unclean; therefore, he sent the LORD to Pilate, the Gentile Roman representative. This caused a problem for the Jews. Pilate held court inside his palace. The Jews could not place a foot on the steps to the palace without becoming unclean for seven

days under their interpretation of the law in this passage. They had construed that touching a Gentile or his property was considered the same as touching a corpse. Therefore, they had to stand at a distance and Pilate had to hold court on his porch. Had they touched his property, killed Jesus, touched the cross, touched Golgotha or touched the tomb, they would have been immediately unclean for seven days and required to go through the purification process with the water collected from a running stream or spring and a few pinches of the ashes of the red heifer.

## The Purification Process

### Ashes Mixed with Flowing Water

19:17 'Then for the unclean *person* they shall take some of the ashes of the burnt purification from sin and flowing water shall be added to them in a vessel.

The unclean person did not touch the vase with the ashes. That was done by someone who was clean. The ashes were mixed with the running water in a bowl.

### Use of Hyssop to Sprinkle Mixture

19:18 'A clean person shall take hyssop and dip *it* in the water, and sprinkle *it* on the tent and on all the furnishings and on the persons who were there, and on the one who touched the bone or the one slain or the one dying *naturally* or the grave.

After mixing the ashes with the water, a stalk of hyssop was dipped in the water and sprinkled on everything and everyone that were considered unclean from touching a corpse that had died for any reason or in any manner.

### Third Day and Seventh

19:19 'Then the clean *person* shall sprinkle on the unclean on the third day and on the seventh day; and on the seventh day he shall purify him from uncleanness, and he shall wash his clothes and bathe *himself* in water and shall be clean by evening.

The sprinkling was a two-step process. It occurred on the third and seventh days. After the seventh day's sprinkling, the person was to strip himself of all his clothes and take a bath. By evening, which means our afternoon, the person was finally clean.

### Ceremony Required

19:20 'But the man who is unclean and does not purify himself from uncleanness, that person shall be cut off from the midst of the assembly, because he has defiled the sanctuary of the LORD; the water for impurity has not been sprinkled on him, he is unclean.

Failure to go through the ceremonial process for cleanliness was considered a defilement of "the sanctuary of the LORD." Why was it a defilement? It was a defilement because the LORD had given the specific instruction about touching a corpse, it was His command. Refusing to follow the command of the LORD was considered a defilement of the sanctuary whether it was the Tabernacle in the wilderness, the Temple that would later be built in Jerusalem or the