

Hello everyone,

PERCENT OF BIBLE COMPLETED: 14.7%

Weekly Readings will cover: Numbers 15 through Numbers 21

Sunday: Numbers 15

Monday: Numbers 16

Tuesday: Numbers 17

Wednesday: Numbers 18

Thursday: Numbers 19

Friday: Numbers 20

Saturday: Numbers 21

Current # of email addresses in the group: 583

I hope your week of study went well. This next week contains a lot of interesting recorded history of God's people and many lessons for us today. We will also see some of the themes and knowledge from the book of Leviticus come forward as well. I hope you each enjoy this week's study.

Website archive location for audio files & PDFs:

<https://www.ucg.org/congregations/san-francisco-bay-area-ca/posts/audio-links-re-three-year-chronological-deep-dive-reading-program-circa-2022-2025-903711>

3-YEAR CHRONOLOGICAL STUDY: Week 27

Read the following passages & the Daily Deep Dive on the daily reading.

Day 162 - SUNDAY: May 21st

Numbers 15

Daily Deep Dive:

We'll begin with the UCG reading plan for this chapter: "This chapter starts off on a positive, encouraging note. God says, "When you have come into the land you are to inhabit..." (verse 2). This might seem odd on the heels of the last chapter. But remember that despite what had happened, God had stated that the younger generation *would* eventually enter Canaan. And in giving various commands regarding the making of grain and drink offerings in the land, He was also reaffirming that promise.

Verse 19 refers to a "heave" offering, a term that may sound strange to our ears. The word heave means "to lift up." It is thus the same as a wave offering. Here it is explained that the Israelites were to heave the first of each grain harvest. "Right at the beginning of the harvest, the harvester had to acknowledge that his produce was a gift from God. By holding up the very first produce from a harvest or the first cake made from the first grain of the season, the worshiper thanked God as the giver of all good gifts" (*Nelson Study Bible*, note on verse 17-21).

The chapter then moves on to the subject of sin. When someone got mixed up or forgot to perform a particular duty, such a sin of ignorance could be readily remedied. But deliberate sins, or sinning "presumptuously" (literally, "with a high hand")—in essence, defiantly shaking one's fist in God's face—was another matter entirely. It merited a severe penalty. Following in the chapter is an example of just such a situation—that of a man deliberately working on the Sabbath. The people didn't know how to deal with such a willful breaking of the commandment, so they temporarily incarcerated him until they could get instructions. The law already stated that he should die (Exodus 31:15), but not the means of death. God told Moses the man should die outside the camp of Israel at the hands of the people by stoning. This way all Israel would participate in and realize the severity of the punishment and the absoluteness of God's commandments. Today, no one is executed for Sabbath breaking. But God has already shown us His decreed penalty and exactly how He feels about the need to obey His laws. Indeed, the penalty for all sin is ultimately death (Romans 6:23).

Man is not to seek after the things of his own heart, or his own eyes, or the pride of life, because those things are of the world (Numbers 15:39; 1 John 2:16). Rather, we must forsake the spiritual harlotry of our old, sinful nature and set ourselves apart to follow only the true God (Numbers 15:40-41). We do not need to use tassels today as memory

devices to remember all of God's laws, as God told the Israelites. Instead, God's Spirit writes His laws on our hearts and minds (Hebrews 8:10), helping us to remember all of His commands (John 14:26).” [END]

Verse 3 – You’ll remember from our study of Leviticus 7:11, that these offerings being described here, related to fulfilling a vow or out of free will, were the Peace Offerings. We will also again see instructions for grain and drink offerings that were to be offered with the Burnt offerings and Peace offerings. Since we covered these in great detail in Leviticus, as well as a sermon series on the 5 main offerings, we won’t go back through any of that here.

Verse 24 – This verse is translated in a variety of different ways. As I dug into the Hebrew, I don’t feel the NKJV does a very good job capturing the thought here. The NKJV says “without the knowledge of the congregation”, but the word “without” is not in the Hebrew. Here are a few other translations that may help us understand the passage: Literal Standard Version (LSV) – “then it has been, if from the eyes of the congregation it has been done through ignorance, that all the congregation has prepared one bullock...”

Easy to Read version (ERV) – “If you made this mistake where everyone could see it, the whole community must offer a young bull as a burnt offering...”

Contemporary English Version (CEV) – “If all of you disobey one of my laws without meaning to, you must offer a bull as a sacrifice...”

The idea here seems to indicate the entire congregation was involved in the sin or allowing the sin, not in willful sin against God, but through a lack of knowledge or awareness. The entire congregation needs atonement and forgiveness.

Verse 27 – Now we move from the congregational level sin (verses 22 through 26), to an individual who sins unintentionally.

Verse 30 – Unintentional sin is now contrasted with presumptuous sin. The word “presumptuously” in Hebrew is two words. One is a very common Hebrew word translated 1,359 times in the KJV as “hand”. The other is a Hebrew word most often translated to “lift up” or “exalt”.

This is the only time in the bible these two words used together are translated “presumptuously”. To understand what God is saying when these two words are used together, let’s examine some other passages.

In 1 King 11:26 & 27, we find that Jeroboam rebelled against Solomon. In both verses, it says he “rebelled” (NKJV). The KJV says, “he lifted up his hand”. The same two Hebrew words translated “presumptuously” in Numbers 15:30.

In Deuteronomy 32:27, God says He doesn’t destroy rebellious Israel because he doesn’t want the enemies/adversaries to misunderstand and think/say, “Our hand is high; And it is not the LORD who has done all this.” Here, the “hand is high” is about claiming that on their own strength, Israel would be destroyed (instead of it being God who would have destroyed them).

In Micah 5:9, God through Micah prophesizes about the remnant of Jacob, “Your hand shall be lifted against your adversaries, And all your enemies shall be cut off.”

Notice here that their “hand shall be lifted up”, these same two Hebrew words again, showing that they are against their adversaries.

In Exodus 14:8, and Numbers 33:3, these same two words are used about Israel coming out of Egypt with “boldness” (NKJV) (“High hand” KJV).

So what can we glean from all of this? We see these two Hebrew words indicate “rebellion”, “boldness”, and opposing strength.

We never want to sin against God in this way, to know what is right and what God commands, but to essentially say to God, “I will do it my way”, “I don’t care what you have commanded”.

Individuals who sinned in this way were to be “cut off” (which often meant death) and were to be guilty of their sin (in contrast with the atonement/forgiveness seen in the previous verses).

Verse 32 – We are immediately given the example of a man who by implication is defiantly working on the Sabbath. JFB commentary states: “This incident is evidently narrated as an instance of presumptuous sin. The mere gathering of sticks was not a sinful act and might be necessary for fuel to warm him or to make ready his food. But its being done on the Sabbath altered the entire character of the action. The law of the Sabbath being a plain and positive commandment, this transgression of it was a known and wilful sin, and it was marked by several aggravations. For the deed was done with unblushing boldness in broad daylight, in open defiance of the divine authority” [END]

Verse 39 – The tassels were an outward symbol to help the children of Israel to remember and be mindful of God’s laws. God also tells them that their own hearts and eyes are inclined to “harlotry” (NKJV). The KJV uses “whoring”. Throughout the Bible, God uses this term to describe the nation of Israel, God’s own special people, whom He considered His bride/wife when they chased after other gods, nations or ways of life that were contrary to Him and to His law. As Christians, we are the bride of Christ and we too are capable of “cheating” on our Husband by going astray after the lusts of this world. God has given us something much better than tassels to help us remember to be obedient to Him, we have His Holy Spirit within us to bring to remembrance God’s laws and way (John 14:26).

Day 163 - MONDAY: May 22nd

Numbers 16

Daily Deep Dive:

We now come to a very important example recorded for us in the Bible. So many problems could be avoided if more attention was given to this chapter. Let's begin with the UCG reading plan for this day: "Korah, a first cousin to Moses, and 250 leaders of the assembly arose in self-exaltation against Moses and Aaron with claims that they were superseding their authority. These men hypocritically accused Moses and Aaron, saying, "You exalt yourselves above the assembly of the Lord" (verse 3). There is within sinners the proclivity to accuse others of the same sin they are committing (verse 7; Romans 2:1). These men wanted a piece of the action, to appoint themselves as leaders and teachers over the congregation. They took too much upon *themselves*, speaking evil of things they did not understand (compare Jude 1:10-11). They were refusing to recognize that God was working in a special way with Moses and Aaron, and they hadn't learned anything from Miriam and Aaron's misjudgment in a similar way regarding Moses.

Moses told Korah and the 250 to bring bronze censers (devices for burning incense, each made of a bowl with a colander on top, swung on a chain). Why? Because besides the contention over judging the nation, these men were also disputing Aaron's position over the priesthood. They were not priests, and the burning of incense was a priestly duty these men were trying to usurp (Numbers 16:40). Again, they had apparently not learned anything from the terrible mistake of Nadab and Abihu, who had died because they offered strange fire before the Lord (Numbers 3:4; Leviticus 10:1-2).

Because God is the One who put Moses and Aaron in their respective offices, the rebellious action of the men led by Korah was actually against God (Numbers 16:11, Numbers 16:30). Moreover, as the sons of Levi, they had already been appointed to very respected positions in the service of His tabernacle. And yet they weren't satisfied—they wanted the judgeship and priesthood also (verses 9-10). "The men who

were seeking a higher position were in fact being contemptuous of the place to which God had appointed them. Moses' response was condescending and scathing: 'Is it a small thing to you?' The dissenters should have realized how gracious God had been in giving them the life work He had provided. They were not unlike people who complain about the gifts God has given them" (*Nelson Study Bible*, note on Numbers 16:9-11).

These men rejected Moses' authority, claiming that he was lording authority over them like some worldly prince—which is utterly ridiculous given the humility of Moses and His many intercessions for the Israelites, including his offer to give up His own eternal salvation to save them. Dathan and Abiram, two allies of Korah, even praised Egypt as the land of milk and honey (verse 13), accused Moses of wrongdoing for leading them out of that land, and absurdly blamed him for the fact that the Israelites had been denied entrance to the Promised Land (verse 14). It may be that many were beginning to be swayed by these accusations, since God once again stands ready to blast the entire nation from existence—though He relents from this course at the intercession of Moses and Aaron. Nevertheless, the principal evildoers come to a dramatic end.

It is easily overlooked here, but, thankfully, not all of Korah's family followed him in this rebellion (Numbers 26:11). Indeed, Korah's descendants were later prominent among the Levites (see 2 Chronicles 20:19), serving as gatekeepers at the temple (1 Chronicles 26) and as musicians, contributing many psalms for temple worship (see Psalms 42; 44-49; 84-85; 87-88). There is a natural human tendency to support those within our families. But this becomes a problem when the family member being supported is engaging in wrongdoing. There is a similar sin in the supporting of those in leadership positions when they are leading sinful lives (verse 26). The scriptures are clear that God disqualifies leaders who refuse to repent of overt sin in their lives. We

can never condone sin. To just say, "I'll put it in God's hands," when we have an obligation to stand up and be counted, is the same as temporarily approving of a sinful situation—and that is always wrong. That's why Moses drew that proverbial "line in the sand," asking people to show where they stood by backing away from the rebels.

The people of the congregation do back away and witness the incredible event of the earth swallowing up the leading rebels with their families and fire consuming the unauthorized incense offerers. But astonishingly, the congregation complains against Moses and Aaron the next day, blaming them for killing God's people. God is understandably infuriated, and again—only the next day!—He tells Moses and Aaron to get out of the way so that He can destroy the nation (verses 44-45). In His wrath God sends a terrible plague. But again, Moses desires to save the people and orders Aaron to quickly make atonement for them. Aaron, as a clear type of Christ—a mediator, a savior, a deliverer—intercedes for the congregation, standing between life and death to stop the plague, which had already slain nearly 15,000 people (verses 48-49).” [END]

As we begin to go through these verses in detail, I want to again reference Romans 13:1-2 where it says: “...For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.”

God places and removes individuals from positions of authority. We are often tempted to justify rebellion against authority. David correctly understood this principle when in 1 Samuel 26:9-11 David said to his warrior Abishai regarding killing King Saul: "Do not destroy him; for who can stretch out his hand against the LORD's anointed, and be guiltless?" David said furthermore, "As the LORD lives, the LORD shall strike him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall go out to battle and

perish. The LORD forbid that I should stretch out my hand against the LORD's anointed.”

Division and rebellion are not of God. It can be easily justified in our human minds, but God is the one who raises/lowers leaders. Let's now dive into these verses.

Verse 2 – Notice there were 250 “leaders of the congregation” and “men of renown”. These were men with reputations, a name people knew. They were famous in the nation. People will often follow people who are well known, have built up reputations over the years, and assume they must be right since they are so well thought of and respected, yet, in this case, these 250 “men of renown” were leading a sinful rebellion that God hated.

Verse 3 – Here comes the accusations and justification. First, they claim that Moses and Aaron took “too much on themselves”. Did Moses and Aaron place themselves in those positions? Did they take the authority to themselves? No, God had placed them in those positions and given them that authority. These men simply didn't like it.

Next, they say that the whole congregation is holy and the people are holy and that God is with them. All of this is true. It's also true of the church today. The whole Church is Holy (1 Peter 2:9), yet, even though that is true, we are not all in the same positions of authority within God's church. Ephesians 4:11-13 tells us: “And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;”

Here these 250 men take a true statement and twist it/misapply it, to justify & excuse their rebellion.

Remember, Number 12:3 told us that Moses is more humble than anyone on the earth, and yet he is being accused of seizing power and exalting himself. Here these accusations aren't based on reality at all, yet these well-known leaders are convinced they are correct.

Verse 9 – Sometimes people reveal their true motivations for power and position. Sometimes people are not satisfied with where God has placed them in the body but want a different place in the body (one God hasn't given or placed them into). What about us? Do we serve wherever God places us with all our might or do we desire something different?

Verse 12 – Dathan and Abiram will not submit under the authority of Moses and refuse to come.

Verse 18 – While the nation of Israel was holy to God, these men were not consecrated and separated for the purpose of serving as priests before God with the Holy things. That was a position that God appointed to Aaron and his sons.

Verse 35 – When we see God handle a situation so strongly (opening up the earth to swallow individuals or sending fire from heaven) it should make us stop and think seriously about this situation and how careful we should all be not to repeat their mistake.

Verse 38 – John Gill's commentary states: "they offered them in his presence, they burned incense in them, and to him, though it was not their business, but the business of the priests; yet these being done, and by his orders, for an open trial who were his priests and who not, they were not to be put to common use:"

Verse 41 – Could we ever be guilty of complaining against some authority of God, thinking they are doing something wrong, or that they have mishandled a situation, etc...but it was actually God who did the thing we are complaining about? I ask these questions because we must try to put ourselves into these situations so we can learn and not make the same mistakes ourselves.

Day 164 - TUESDAY: May 23rd

Numbers 17

Daily Deep Dive:

Here is the UCG reading plan for this chapter: “In the rebellion of Korah, the heresy that just any Israelite could serve in God's priesthood had spread throughout the camp. And even though the instigators of this idea had been removed, the idea itself persisted among the people. Indeed, it was evident from the people's response following God's execution of the rebels—blaming Moses and Aaron—that they did not really understand why God had done this. So He would make it very clear to them that only Aaron and His descendants were to serve as the priests of His physical nation—and that any violation of this rule would merit death, as they had already witnessed.

God asked Moses for each family tribe to get a staff, a rod, and whittle the name of the family's leader onto the stick. Aaron's name was to be on the rod of the family of the Levites. If the name "Levi" had been on the rod of the Levites, all the Levites would have an equal claim to the priesthood. But as we know, that was not the case (remember, even Korah and his family were Levites). Moses was then to lay these 12 rods side by side before God in the tabernacle. God would settle the matter, hopefully once and for all, by miraculously causing the rod of the one He had chosen to blossom (verse 5). That would put a stop to any and all claims that the priesthood belonged to others. Moses did as God had instructed, and the next day Aaron's rod had buds, blossoms and

almonds that had already ripened! Every tribe got their lifeless stick back, while Aaron's blossoming rod was laid up in the Most Holy Place to serve as a sign against any future attempts to usurp the priesthood (Hebrews 9:3-4).

Finally, the congregation seems to get the picture that God is more serious about preserving the sanctity of His holy things than about physical life and death. However, considering the context, it appears that Numbers 17 ends with the Israelites falling into despair over the concern that they could be annihilated due to some random mistake or oversight at the tabernacle (see verses 12-13)—in which case, God basically answers their concern in the next chapter.” [END]

After reading the above UCG reading plan, I don't have any additional deep-dive comments on this chapter.

Day 165 - WEDNESDAY: May 24th

Numbers 18

Daily Deep Dive:

Here is the UCG reading plan for this chapter: “The congregation now seems to have a healthy reverence and respect for the holy things of God. The people are to generally keep their distance from the tabernacle. But as we glimpsed in yesterday's reading, they are apparently very concerned that they could be annihilated for some random mistake or oversight when they were required to approach the tabernacle, such as when bringing offerings. And indeed, God reveals that if mistakes happen at the tabernacle, someone will be called to account. But God lets it be known that the responsibility for ensuring the proper care and appropriate service of the tabernacle belongs to the priests and other Levites, and that *they* will be held individually accountable if anything goes awry.

The thought is expressed this way: "You and your sons and your father's house with you [i.e., all the Levites] shall bear the iniquity related to the sanctuary, and you and your sons [i.e., just the priests] shall bear the iniquity associated with your priesthood" (verse 1). The word "iniquity" can throw us off a little. The word translated "iniquity" (Hebrew *'avon*) means "perverseness" and derives from a root meaning "to be bent or crooked." The English word "wrong," which originally connoted being "wrung out of course," gives us the same word picture (E.W. Bullinger, *Companion Bible*, appendix 44, sec. 4.) While it can mean deliberate evil, it can also simply mean that something is incorrect or not the way it is supposed to be for whatever reason. And if some aspect is out of kilter in the service of the priesthood or tabernacle due to slackness, incompetence, neglect or any such thing on the part of an individual who is supposed to be keeping watch over this aspect, that individual will be held guilty.

In reading through these passages, we should desire to understand the import they hold for us now. Leadership today, as in ancient Israel, carries great responsibility and accountability. Every consideration must be given to lead in a righteous way, using mature wisdom in following all the laws and principles of God. Those in God's Church are told not to take too much upon themselves. Just as the Levitical priesthood was not for all Israelites, so being ordained as a minister of Jesus Christ or appointed by the ministry to teach is not for all *spiritual* Israelites, i.e., true Christians. The apostle James wrote to fellow Christians, "Let not many of you become teachers [which was anciently the responsibility of the priests and Levites], knowing that we [teachers, as James was] shall receive a stricter judgment" (James 3:1). Leaders today will "bear the iniquity" if they misuse their offices.

To Aaron and his sons, and their families, belonged all the tabernacle offerings for their sustenance. This required Aaron and his sons to live by faith. Having no worldly jobs or income, they depended entirely on

God. Aaron's family had no inheritance in the land and looked to God to be their inheritance. "I am your portion and your inheritance among the children of Israel," God said (verse 20). The Levites would only have small lots of land for the purpose of keeping a few animals to provide their daily needs. So to the Levites went the tithes that were received of all Israel as their inheritance (verse 21). The Levites, in turn, then tithed on their income to Aaron the priest (verses 26-28). And now, as the book of Hebrews explains, God has directed that tithes and offerings go to different recipients—those who represent the Melchizedek priesthood (see Hebrews 7)." [END]

Verses 6 & 7 – We should notice that it's God who selected the Levites to serve as a gift to Aaron. Also, God gave Aaron the priesthood as a gift. None of these individuals decided of themselves to serve in this way, they were chosen by God for these important roles.

Verses 9 – 19: Notice, there were some aspects of the offerings that were only to be consumed by Aaron and his sons (only the males), while the heave & wave offerings were for the entire family. The requirement to be clean (a principle we discussed at length in Leviticus) applies to everyone who ate from the offerings. All of these things belonged to God, but God gave them to them out of His love and appreciation for their dedicated service.

Day 166 - THURSDAY: May 25th

Numbers 19

Daily Deep Dive:

We'll begin with the UCG reading plan: "Here we have one of the most mysterious sacrifices in the Bible. According to author Grant Jeffrey: "The Talmud claims that the Red Heifer sacrifice was the only one of God's commands that King Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, claimed he did not understand" (*The Signature of God*, 1996, pp. 152-153). And indeed, we still may not understand all of the symbolism in

this most interesting offering. We do know that we are cleansed by the blood of the supreme sacrifice of Jesus Christ (1 John 1:7). And the book of Hebrews confirms that this is part of the symbolism here: "For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Hebrews 9:13-14). But there is also the fact that the heifer was a representation of Israel in the Scriptures. Perhaps, then, as was mentioned in the discussion on the sin offering, there is some sense of this offering being fulfilled in the people putting to death their old natures. Indeed, that would seem to tie in with having our consciences purged from dead works. Moreover, though there is not sufficient space to elaborate on it here, Christ stood in Israel's place in a number of respects.

In any event, besides the spiritual significance it certainly had, Jeffrey explains that there was a medical benefit to what God was prescribing here as well, just as there was with the laws for dealing with leprosy. In fact, there were clear similarities (compare Leviticus 14:4). Jeffrey states that "the water of purification described in Numbers 19 actually had the ability to destroy germs and infection. The resulting water of purification solution contained ashes from the Red Heifer sacrifice combined with cedar, hyssop and scarlet thread. This water of purification contained 'cedar' oil that came from a kind of juniper tree that grew in both Israel and the Sinai. This cedar oil would irritate the skin, encouraging the person to vigorously rub the solution into their hands. Most importantly, the hyssop tree—associated with mint, possibly marjoram—would produce hyssop oil. This hyssop oil is actually a very effective antiseptic and antibacterial agent. Hyssop oil contains 50 percent carvacrol, which is an antifungal and antibacterial agent still used in medicine, according to the book *None of These Diseases*. When we note that the waters of purification from the Red

Heifer Sacrifice were to be used to cleanse someone who had become defiled and unclean due to touching a dead body, we begin to understand that this law was an incredibly effective medical law as well as a spiritual law" (p. 153).

Of course, it is not clear how much of the cedar and hyssop oil would remain after burning in the fire. There was probably some. But perhaps God was interested more in the symbolism of cleansing agents here than their actual effectiveness. Burning is itself symbolic of purification.

Still, the discussion on open versus sealed containers in the area where someone died should convince any modern reader that God must have had germs in mind to some degree. And it is again worth noting, as in the highlights on leprosy, that there is no way Moses could have understood the need for such advanced medical precautions based on the available knowledge of the time. Divine inspiration is truly the only reasonable conclusion that can be reached." [END]

Verse 2 – The Hebrew word for “heifer” has already been used a number of times already, but has been translated as “cow” in all previous verses except Genesis 15:9, where it’s translated as “heifer”. This is only the second time we have seen the word “red” in the Bible. The first time was in Genesis 25:30 when Esau wanted Jacob’s red stew. This is the only time where the color of the animal is specified.

It is my assumption, that the color of this animal is meant to serve as a type of the state of our Savior Jesus Christ. Let’s review a few passages to examine this. Hebrews 9:13-14 states: “For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”

Here we clearly see the author of Hebrews alludes to a variety of sacrifices & offerings, but note the clear connection to “ashes of a

heifer” and cleansing/purification physically, to the antitype of the blood of Jesus Christ, who was without spot, for our spiritual cleansing/purification.

In the prophetic Psalm 22, in verse 6, it describes the condition of Jesus Christ during the crucifixion process, when it states: “But I am a worm, and no man;” The Hebrew word for “worm” is translated as “scarlet/crimson” 35 out of the 43 times it’s found in the KJV. Why? Because this word was used for the color/dye produced from the dried body of a worm “*coccus ilicis*”, as well as the worm itself. It is my speculation that Psalm 22:6 would like us as the reader to make the connection between the likeness of smashing/breaking the bodies of these worms and the red crimson color that came out, to the beaten/crushed body of Jesus Christ and the red bloodied state of his body.

We saw in the various aspects of the Offerings of Leviticus how they each brought out different aspects of our Lord Jesus Christ. Here, I believe the color of this animal is meant to again to point to an aspect of Jesus Christ’s blood for our purification.

It’s worth noting, that in September of 2022, 5 red heifers were shipped from Texas to Jerusalem. These animals were just under a year old at that time. At that time, these 5 animals passed the very detailed process of examining them for any hair that was not red and looking for any spot or blemish. These heifers, as of March 2023 were in a secure, undisclosed location in Israel. These animals are now between 1 ½ to 2 years old. According to Jewish teaching, these animals must be 3 years old to be sacrificed, which still leaves time for them to develop a single white or black hair and therefore be disqualified from use. Without going into much detail, the “Temple Institute” claims to have 9 pure priests who have never touched a dead body and the land on the Temple mount for such a sacrifice.

Back to verse 2. The heifer could never have worn a yoke at any time. This may point to the fact that Jesus Christ was never a slave of sin. He was never in bondage to sin. He also was not forced to give His life for our cleansing (John 10:18), but freely gave it for us.

Verse 6 – These three things; cedar wood, hyssop and scarlet were the same as used in the cleansing of a leper (see Leviticus 14:4).

Verse 9 – While the sacrifice was unblemished, it's sacrifice was for sin and therefore it was slaughtered, burned, and ashes stored outside the camp in a clean place. We'll see more of their purpose later in this chapter.

Verse 11 – If someone touched a dead animal, they were only unclean for a day (compared to Leviticus 11:24, 27, 39), but he who touches a dead human body was unclean for 7 days.

Verse 12 – Why 3 and 7? I don't know (haha). We understand that 7 throughout the Bible represent fulfillment, completeness, & perfection. The following is purely my speculation. The only sign Jesus Christ said He would give to that evil generation was that He would be in the heart of the earth 3 days and 3 nights (Matthew 12:39). Without His resurrection after 3 days/nights, we would still be in our sins (1 Corinthians 15:17). We would not be clean, just as Number 19:12 said "But if he does not purify himself on the third day and on the seventh day, he will not be clean." Is it enough that Jesus Christ was resurrected after 3 days? We also need His second coming. At the second coming of Jesus Christ, the firstfruits of God will be transformed into immortal & incorruptible spirit beings (compare 1 Corinthians 15:52 & 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17). At this time, we will be perfect and complete. Jesus Christ second coming will usher in the government of God and the start of the Millennium. The Sabbath (7th day) has pointed to this time period and step of God's plan. Could 3 & 7 represent the

resurrection and second coming of Jesus Christ which will make our purification/cleansing complete?

Verse 13 – This sprinkling of water was necessary for one to become clean. Without it, a person was not clean. This may be a type of forerunner of the New Testament baptism, where a person wasn't just sprinkled with water for temporary physical cleansing, but fully submerged in water, joining us to the death & resurrection of Jesus Christ (compare Romans 6:3-5). Without baptism, we as Christians are not cleansed from our sins. These are large topics that I hope each of you will meditate on as entire sermons could be given on these connections.

Day 167 - FRIDAY: May 26th

Numbers 20

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading plan states the following on this chapter: “When the people arrive in Kadesh, decades have passed since the last chapter! Kadesh was the same location where Israel rebelled against entering the Promised Land. Back when the spies brought their evil report, God had told the Israelites they would be in the wilderness 40 years. These years have been long and bitter, with rebellion upon rebellion (compare Ezekiel 20:13-24). And now it is the 40th and final year of their wandering. Nearly all the people who were 20 years and older at the time of the exodus have died out. Miriam, at around the age of 130, dies as this final year begins (verse 1).

Sadly, those of the younger generation proved just as rebellious as their parents (Ezekiel 20:18-24). When they complained to Moses that they had no water, Moses and Aaron went to the tabernacle to ask God what to do. And God gave some straightforward instructions: Take the rod; gather the assembly; speak to the rock where the people can see. That shouldn't have been too hard to follow. But Moses had finally had

it. He was, after all this time, completely fed up with the Israelites-- "You rebels," he called them (verse 10). And while this was understandable, his anger got the better of him.

After so many years of being browbeaten by the people, Moses and Aaron, perhaps in a momentary lapse, became puffed up. Moses didn't say, "God will give you water." No, he said, "Must *we* bring water for you out of this rock?" (verse 10). And he *struck* the rock instead of speaking to it, just as he had done nearly 40 years before (see Exodus 17:6). Only this time, God had not told him to strike it. Nevertheless, he even struck it twice. God labeled this a lack of faith, saying, "You did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel" (verse 12). Apparently, then, it wasn't that Moses and Aaron didn't believe water would come out by merely speaking, but they didn't believe God's earlier warnings about the seriousness of following His instructions exactly. Or, perhaps more accurately, they didn't believe that these warnings applied to *them*—as if their closeness to God gave them some leeway. However, as they should have known, just the opposite is true. Those in leadership positions are held to *stricter* accountability—to set the right example for everyone else. Moses and Aaron called the people rebels. Yet they rebelled against God's words themselves (verse 24; Romans 2:1). Neither would enter the Promised Land. Aaron died above their next encampment on Mount Hor at the age of 123 (verses 25-28; Numbers 33:38-39).

There is a vital lesson here for us. We are never too old to be tested. None of us are ever so perfect that we don't have lessons to learn. And no matter who we are or what position we have, we are not excused from obeying God—a fact the Israelites desperately needed to know.

Verses 14-21 of chapter 20 record Moses' attempt to negotiate peaceful passage through Edom's territory. He even offered to pay Edom for any of the land's resources they used in route. But Edom

rebuffed Moses' offer. This is one of several acts of antagonism Edom shows toward the descendants of Jacob. Old grudges die hard, and sometimes they never do unless God intervenes.” [END]

Verse 12 – What a difficult lesson for Moses to learn. It’s important that we learn from this example too. One of the lessons that jumped out to me is even if we have lived decades in service to God and His people, and been obedient, we must complete our race and never let up. The race isn’t finished until it’s finished and we can lose out if we aren’t faithful until the end (Hebrews 6:11-12). The people themselves learned a vital lesson as well. All of us can fail, even leaders. God shows no partiality. He didn’t give Moses a pass in this situation, just because He had done so much to serve God.

Verse 13 – “Meribah” means strife or contention (BDB).

Verse 14 – John Gill’s commentary states: “the Israelites and Edomites springing from two men, Jacob and Esau, who were twin brothers, and is observed to ingratiate themselves to the Edomites, and gain their request, pleading relation to them:”

Day 168 - SATURDAY: May 27th

Numbers 21

Daily Deep Dive:

The UCG reading plan states the following for the introduction to this chapter: “The rest of the trip toward the Promised Land would be hard and difficult. First, the king of the Canaanite city of Arad picks a fight, and carries some Israelites away captive. God empowers the Israelites to "utterly destroy" the Aradites in a place that became known as Hormah, meaning "Utter Destruction." Interestingly, this first military victory against the Canaanites takes place in the same spot that, decades before, the Israelites had been defeated when they vainly tried

to enter Canaan after God told them they would have to wait 40 years (compare Numbers 14:45).” [END]

Verse 3 – Hormah means “devotion” (BDB)

Here is another section from the UCG reading plan: “Yet the victorious spirit does not carry them all the way. Going around Edom proves so difficult that the children of Israel become discouraged—which once again turns to bitter complaining. When their ingratitude leads them to declare that they detest the God-given manna sustaining them, calling it “worthless,” God sends them deadly fiery serpents. In terror and agony, the people quickly repent, asking for Moses' prayers on their behalf.” [END]

Verse 5 – It’s worth remembering that this bread (manna) is a type of Jesus Christ, the true Bread from Heaven (John 6:32, 35). This manna was such an important symbol and such an amazing miracle that God had a golden pot of manna placed inside the ark of the covenant (see Hebrew 9:4). How offensive for Israel to say that they abhorred this “insubstantial/contemptible/worthless” bread.

Verse 6 – The word for “to burn” in Hebrew is “[śârâph](#) (שָׂרַף) (H8313)”. Here in this verse, it says the Lord sent “fiery serpents”. The word “fiery” in Hebrew is “[śârâph](#)” (שָׂרַף) (H8314). While these are two different Strong numbers, you can see they are essentially the same word. In this sense, the “fiery” aspect of these serpents was the burning pain that resulted from their venom. While this part of the world is known for having 9 venomous snakes, the most common is the Palestinian Viper (this is the national snake of Israel). It’s venom damages the nervous system and destroys tissue (such as skin and blood vessels). It’s also known for having an extremely painful (“fiery”) bite.

It's worth noting that this word for "fiery" ("sârâph" (שָׂרָפִים) (H8314)) is the same word that is also translated Seraphim in Isaiah 6:2, 6 but in both of those verses, the word serpent is not included.

Not only did the venom burn, but it was also lethal.

Verse 7 – The people correctly acknowledge their sin and turn to God for healing. Moses, God's appointed leader, seeks God's healing and direction for the people. God provides the way in which He would provide the healing.

Verse 8 – At this time, a conquered enemy was often raised on a pole and paraded around as a visual display of one's dominance over the enemy. The people had no power or ability to stop the snakes. Moses had no ability or power to stop the snakes. Only God could be victorious over these fiery serpents. These snakes were nothing to God and He alone had the power to conquer them. The people were sinners and they had received a lethal punishment. Their sins were about to bring about death, yet by following God's instructions, God would intervene, displaying His power over the enemy and providing the healing they desperately needed.

This is a bit of a bizarre story until we dig a bit deeper. Who did Israel complain about and test? It was the Word (the pre-incarnate Jesus Christ). 1 Corinthians 10:9 tells us "nor let us tempt (test/prove) Christ, as some of them also tempted (to try/test), and were destroyed by serpents;"

This great God Being would later be born as a human, coming in the flesh, and would tell us in John 3:14 – 15: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."

All of us were doomed to death, not due to a serpent, but due to our sins, but instead of us paying our deserved penalty and dying, Jesus Christ took our place and paid our debt/penalty and He was raised up

on the cross/pole and crucified so that we would not perish, but have eternal life.

Hebrews 2:14 – 15 states: “Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”

Christ didn't just usher in physical healing for us, but more importantly, spiritual healing that would save us from eternal death.

The Word (Jesus Christ) defeated the physical serpents and brought physical healing. Jesus Christ defeated the serpent of old (compare Rev 12:9, 20:2) and brought spiritual healing to mankind.

Verse 14 - Here is another section from the UCG reading plan: “Verse 14 of Numbers 21 mentions the "Book of the Wars of the Lord." *The Nelson Study Bible* says this "refers to an early collection of songs and writings known today only from this citation. The fact that Numbers draws upon other early Hebrew writings shows that the ancient Hebrew peoples had other literature in addition to Scripture." This book is not in existence today.” [END]