

## The Red Heifer

**Background: - Num 19:1** Now the LORD spoke to Moses and to Aaron, saying,

Num 19:2 “This is the statute of the law that the LORD has commanded: Tell the people of Israel to bring you a red heifer without defect, in which there is no blemish, and on which a yoke has never come.

Num 19:3 And you shall give it to Eleazar the priest, and it shall be taken outside the camp and slaughtered before him.

Num 19:4 And 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.

Num 19:5 And the heifer shall be burned in his sight. Its skin, its flesh, and its blood, with its dung, shall be burned.

Num 19:6 And the priest shall take cedarwood and hyssop and scarlet yarn, and throw them into the fire burning the heifer.

Num 19:7 Then the priest shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water, and afterward he may come into the camp. But the priest shall be unclean until evening.

Num 19:8 The one who burns the heifer shall wash his clothes in water and bathe his body in water and shall be unclean until evening.

Num 19:9 And a man who is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer and deposit them outside the camp in a clean place. And they shall be kept for the water for impurity for the congregation of the people of Israel; it is a sin offering.

Num 19:10 And the one who gathers the ashes of the heifer shall wash his clothes and be unclean until evening. And this shall be a perpetual statute for the people of Israel, and for the stranger who sojourns among them.

Num 19:11 “Whoever touches the dead body of any person shall be unclean seven days.

Num 19:12 He shall cleanse himself with the water on the third day and on the seventh day, and so be clean. But if he does not cleanse himself on the third day and on the seventh day, he will not become clean.

Num 19:13 Whoever touches a dead person, the body of anyone who has died, and does not cleanse himself, defiles the tabernacle of the LORD, and that person shall be cut off from Israel; because the water for impurity was not thrown on him, he shall be unclean. His uncleanness is still on him.

Num 19:14 “This is the law when someone dies in a tent: everyone who comes into the tent and everyone who is in the tent shall be unclean seven days.

Num 19:15 And every open vessel that has no cover fastened on it is unclean.

Num 19:16 Whoever in the open field touches someone who was killed with a sword or who died naturally, or touches a human bone or a grave, shall be unclean seven days.

Num 19:17 For the unclean they shall take some ashes of the burnt sin offering, and fresh water shall be added in a vessel.

Num 19:18 Then 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 whoever touched the bone, or the slain or the dead or the grave.

Num 19:19 And the clean person shall sprinkle it on the unclean on the third day and on the seventh day. Thus on the seventh day he shall cleanse him, and he shall wash his clothes and bathe himself in water, and at evening he shall be clean.

Num 19:20 "If the man who is unclean does not cleanse himself, that person shall be cut off from the midst of the assembly, since he has defiled the sanctuary of the LORD. Because the water for impurity has not been thrown on him, he is unclean.

Num 19:21 And it shall be a statute forever for them. The one who sprinkles the water for impurity shall wash his clothes, and the one who touches the water for impurity shall be unclean until evening.

Num 19:22 And whatever the unclean person touches shall be unclean, and anyone who touches it shall be unclean until evening." (They take this seriously!)

**The story** - Joh 2:1 On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.

Joh 2:2 Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples.

Joh 2:3 When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine."

Joh 2:4 And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come."

Joh 2:5 His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." (Who's in charge here?)

Joh 2:6 Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons.

(Very Holy Water jars, for the ashes (very little) of the Red Heifer, brought from the Temple, in Jerusalem, for use in the out-lying districts by the local clergy. Off limits to ordinary people.)

Joh 2:7 Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water." (\*gasp\*) And they filled them up to the brim.

Joh 2:8 And he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast." So they took it. (\*Wide eyed and nervous\*)

Joh 2:9 When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew(!)), the master of the feast called the bridegroom (The gossip line will be hot tonight, everyone will know tomorrow)

Joh 2:10 and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now." (\*smirk\*wink, wink\*)

Joh 2:11 This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him. (Jesus declares war on religion; the disciples were impressed)

In the act of using the Temple's clay jars (there would be no way to cover-up the wine),

The Master of the Feast would have to go to the Temple and ask for new jars.

Jesus proclaimed that His ministry superseded even the Priests of the Temple.