

Life-Study of Numbers Summaries - Messages 26—30

The Levitical Service and The Aaronic Priesthood

The service of the Levites was to take care of the tent of meeting, the tabernacle of the testimony, which is a type of Christ and the church. In taking care of the tabernacle and its contents, the Levites did not serve God directly; rather they served the priesthood and the priests, who served God directly.

Aaron and his sons were to bear the iniquity of their priesthood. The word *iniquity* is used here to charge the priests not to make mistakes while carrying out their priestly service. Any mistake, neglect, or shortage would have been a kind of iniquity. A reward was given to Aaron and his sons as the priests and to the serving Levites. **This reward was altogether Christ.** The priests and the Levites had no portion other than Christ. Today in the New Testament, the Levitical service is combined with the priesthood. This means that the believers in Christ are both the priests and the serving Levites. **The only reward, the only compensation, for our priestly and Levitical service is Christ.**

The Water for Impurity

Immediately after the rebellion in chapter sixteen, death was everywhere. **The entire population of two million Israelites was under the effect of death.** Thus, there was the need for the water for impurity to annul the effect and impurity of death.

The water was composed of a red heifer, signifying **Christ for our redemption.** It also had cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet. Cedar wood signifies Christ in His **dignified humanity**, hyssop signifies Christ in His **humbled humanity**, and scarlet signifies **redemption** in its highest significance. This means that the high and dignified Christ and the lowly and humbled Christ in His redemption were elements put into the composition of the water for impurity. Finally, there is the ashes of the heifer which signify **Christ reduced to nothing** and running water. This living water signifies **the Holy Spirit in the resurrection of Christ.**

The water of impurity was to be sprinkled upon the unclean persons. The impurity in this chapter does not refer to sin but to death. Death comes out of sin, and sin is the root of death. **Only the working of Christ's redemption, through His dignified and humbled humanity, with His death and the Spirit of His resurrection, could heal and cleanse the situation.**

Further Failures

In chapter 20, in the contending of the people for water, the people contended against Moses with evil words. After going to God and being commanded to speak to the rock for it to yield water, Moses called the people rebels and struck the rock with his rod twice. Moses was wrong both in word and in deed. **Whenever we are angry and do not control ourselves, it is easy for us to make mistakes.** Although Moses was a faithful servant of God, he made a mistake which caused him to lose his right to enter into the promised good land. Moses failed to sanctify God in being angry with the people of Israel and in wrongly striking the rock twice. **In being angry, he did not represent God rightly in His holy nature toward His people.**

The experience of Moses in Numbers 20 is an important lesson for us in the church life today. **We need to learn that, especially when we have been offended by the saints in the church, we should not go to God for the purpose of accusing His people.** If in our prayers we accuse God's people, we will offend Him. The church life should be a forgiving life. For the church life and in the church life, we need a forgiving spirit. Then instead of condemning the saints, we will forget their mistakes and offenses.

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