

# “Defilement, Loss and Jealousy”

## Numbers Chapter 5

God is preparing Israel for the Promised Land. They need to become Promised Land People.

He has:

- counted them,
- organized them under leaders,
- deployed them to specific campsites,
- ordered their positions as they march out and delegated assignments.

The Promised Land people need to be pure people as well. Marching through the wilderness with God the people must be clean. Chapters 5-8 is the preparation this army must go through to be cleansed.

*“Everything and everyone must be in their place for the WALK, the WORK, the WAR, and the WORSHIP in the wilderness.”* J. Vernon McGee

Num 5:1 **1) Dealing with Defilement** vs 1-4

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

Num 5:2 "Command the sons of Israel that they send away from the camp every leper and everyone having a discharge and everyone who is unclean because of a *dead* person.

- God commands who must be put out of the camp.
  - This was commanded by God not by religious men who stand in judgment over people. God's commands are perfect, sure, right, pure, clean and true
  - Psalm 19:7-10 "The law of the LORD [is] **perfect**, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD [is] **sure**, making wise the simple.
  - The statutes of the LORD [are] **right**, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD [is] **pure**, enlightening the eyes.
  - The fear of the LORD [is] **clean**, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD [are] **true** [and] righteous altogether.
  - More to be desired [are they] than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb."
- They are:
  - The Lepers - Diseased (Leviticus 13)
  - Those having a discharge - (Leviticus 15 Man, Woman, Normal and Abnormal discharge)
  - Those touching a dead person - (Leviticus 11:31 & 19:28 & 21:1)

Num 5:3 "You shall send away both male and female; you shall send them outside the camp so that they will not defile their camp where I dwell in their midst."

Num 5:4 The sons of Israel did so and sent them outside the camp; just as the LORD had spoken to Moses, thus the sons of Israel did.

- God required those that are unclean (defiled) to be put out of the camp.
- Leviticus 11:44 "For I am the LORD your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy"
- 1 Peter 1:14-16 "As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, "YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY"
- Paul dealt with sin in Corinth. The Corinthians would not put outside an individual who was unclean with sin. Paul knew the heart of God. Paul dealt with the individual. (1 Corinthians 5)
- God has not ceased to be Holy. And He still requires His people to be holy as well. Unfortunately, the church today seems that holiness is an ancient requirement and that God and His people are more tolerant and sophisticated today for that burden.

Num 5:5 **2) Recovering Loss** vs 5-11

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

Num 5:6 "Speak to the sons of Israel, 'When a man or woman commits any of the sins of mankind, acting unfaithfully against the LORD, and that person is guilty,

Num 5:7 then he shall confess his sins which he has committed, and he shall make restitution in full for his wrong and add to it one-fifth of it, and give *it* to him whom he has wronged.

- If a man violates another and a loss is suffered -- TWO things must happen
  - The sinner must confess his wrong.
  - The sinner must make RESTITUTION
  - Restitution = (KJV-recompense) Heb "shuv" to bring back, reverse, or restore
- Luke 19:8+9 "Zaccheus stopped and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, half of my possessions I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will give back four times as much." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham."
- Not much is preached about restitution any more. Christians like the message that they can commit a wrong say they are sorry, and ask forgiveness. And move on.
- Restitution is a tangible measurement of one's sorrow for transgression.

Num 5:8 'But if the man has no relative to whom restitution may be made for the wrong, the restitution which is made for the wrong *must go* to the LORD for the priest, besides the ram of atonement, by which atonement is made for him.

- There is no excuse for not making restitution.
- If the offended person is no longer available and they have no family, the restitution goes to God's priests.

Num 5:9 'Also every contribution pertaining to all the holy *gifts* of the sons of Israel, which they offer to the priest, shall be his.

Num 5:10 'So every man's holy *gifts* shall be his; whatever any man gives to the priest, it becomes his."

- In the midst of separating the defiled and the sinner making restitution, God reminds the nation that the offerings made to the Lord are shared by the worshipper.
- God's purpose of this cleansing is fellowship with a Holy God..

Num 5:11 **3) Judging Jealousy** vs 11-31

This next portion of scripture is very unique. As one reads through someone could consider this is quite unfair for a wife. To make her go through an embarrassing ceremony because of jealousy. Then there is no consequences when she is proven innocent.

This is actually ceremony to protect the innocent wife from a man's jealousy.

Proverbs 6:4 says, "For jealousy is the rage of a man". This ceremony would eliminate a man's rage towards his wife.

God is dealing with Jealousy in the camp more than he is dealing with adultery through this test.

Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

Num 5:12 "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'If any man's wife goes astray and is unfaithful to him,

Num 5:13 and a man has intercourse with her and it is hidden from the eyes of her husband and she is undetected, although she has defiled herself, and there is no witness against her and she has not been caught in the act,

Num 5:14 if a spirit of jealousy comes over him and he is jealous of his wife when she has defiled herself, or if a spirit of jealousy comes over him and he is jealous of his wife when she has not defiled herself,

Num 5:15 the man shall then bring his wife to the priest, and shall bring *as* an offering for her

one-tenth of an ephah of barley meal; he shall not pour oil on it nor put frankincense on it, for it is a grain offering of jealousy, a grain offering of memorial, a reminder of iniquity.

- In this unique instruction, God is dealing with a "Spirit of Jealousy"
- God wants jealousy dealt with and not left alone to fester.
- This portion of scripture is addressing a wife who may or may not have committed adultery.
- Some might think that the man is not ever dealt with in this same issue.
  - As for adultery - Leviticus 20:10 both the male and female adulterer are put to death.
- The process in this case, the man has to bring his wife and an offering to the priests.

Num 5:16 Then the priest shall bring her near and have her stand before the LORD,  
Num 5:17 and the priest shall take holy water in an earthenware vessel; and he shall take some of the dust that is on the floor of the tabernacle and put *it* into the water.

- The priest shall take holy water from the bronze laver and some dust from the tabernacle floor and mixes them together.

Num 5:18 The priest shall then have the woman stand before the LORD and let *the hair of* the woman's head go loose, and place the grain offering of memorial in her hands, which is the grain offering of jealousy, and in the hand of the priest is to be the water of bitterness that brings a curse.

- The woman lets her hair down and holds the grain offering.

Num 5:19 The priest shall have her take an oath and shall say to the woman, "If no man has lain with you and if you have not gone astray into uncleanness, *being* under *the authority of* your husband, be immune to this water of bitterness that brings a curse;

Num 5:20 if you, however, have gone astray, *being* under *the authority of* your husband, and if you have defiled yourself and a man other than your husband has had intercourse with you"

Num 5:21 (then the priest shall have the woman swear with the oath of the curse, and the priest shall say to the woman), "the LORD make you a curse and an oath among your people by the LORD'S making your thigh waste away and your abdomen swell;

Num 5:22 and this water that brings a curse shall go into your stomach, and make your abdomen swell and your thigh waste away." And the woman shall say, "Amen. Amen."

Num 5:23 The priest shall then write these curses on a scroll, and he shall wash them off into the water of bitterness.

- The woman recites an oath and says
- "AMEN. AMEN" Literally- faithful faithful So be it. So be it.
- The priest writes the oath on a scroll and washes (dips) the scroll into the water.

Num 5:24 Then he shall make the woman drink the water of bitterness that brings a curse, so that the water which brings a curse will go into her and *cause* bitterness.

Num 5:25 The priest shall take the grain offering of jealousy from the woman's hand, and he shall wave the grain offering before the LORD and bring it to the altar;

Num 5:26 and the priest shall take a handful of the grain offering as its memorial offering and offer *it* up in smoke on the altar, and afterward he shall make the woman drink the water.

- The grain offering is then offered.
- The woman drinks the water.
- Everyone is now invested in this ritual.
  - The Husband - brings a grain offering and his marriage,

- The Wife - declares an oath (amen) and her marriage,
- The Priest - doing his job
- God - receiving an oath and an offering (Marriage a picture of Christ & Church)

Num 5:27 'When he has made her drink the water, then it shall come about, if she has defiled herself and has been unfaithful to her husband, that the water which brings a curse will go into her and *cause* bitterness, and her abdomen will swell and her thigh will waste away, and the woman will become a curse among her people.

- If she was unfaithful the oath will come about
- What are the ingredients that cause this reaction?
  - Holy Water
  - Tabernacle Dust
  - Oath Ink
  - The active ingredient (activator) - Guilt Because the same ingredients are used when nothing happens.

Num 5:28 'But if the woman has not defiled herself and is clean, she will then be free and conceive children.

- If she was not unfaithful she will be free and have children.

Num 5:29 'This is the law of jealousy: when a wife, *being under the authority of* her husband, goes astray and defiles herself,

Num 5:30 or when a spirit of jealousy comes over a man and he is jealous of his wife, he shall then make the woman stand before the LORD, and the priest shall apply all this law to her.

Num 5:31 'Moreover, the man will be free from guilt, but that woman shall bear her guilt.'"

**"Scripture quotations taken from the New American Standard Bible<sup>®</sup>,  
Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973,  
1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation  
Used by permission." (www.Lockman.org)**