

²⁸ Say to them, 'As I live, declares the Lord, what you have said in my hearing I will do to you: ²⁹ your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness, and of all your number, listed in the census from twenty years old and upward, who have grumbled against me, ³⁰ not one shall come into the land where I swore that I would make you dwell, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun.

Numbers 14:28–33



³¹ But your little ones, who you said would become a prey, I will bring in, and they shall know the land that you have rejected. ³² But as for you, your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness. ³³ And your children shall be shepherds in the wilderness forty years and shall suffer for your faithlessness, until the last of your dead bodies lies in the wilderness.

Numbers 14:28–33

A topographic map with contour lines and elevation numbers (e.g., 390, 380, 370) serves as the background. A black silhouette of a shepherd with a staff is centered in the upper half of the map.

EMERGING FROM THE WILDERNESS

NUMBERS

A white silhouette of a desert landscape with rolling sand dunes is positioned at the bottom of the map, partially overlapping the text.

Cleansing in the Wilderness | Numbers 19

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

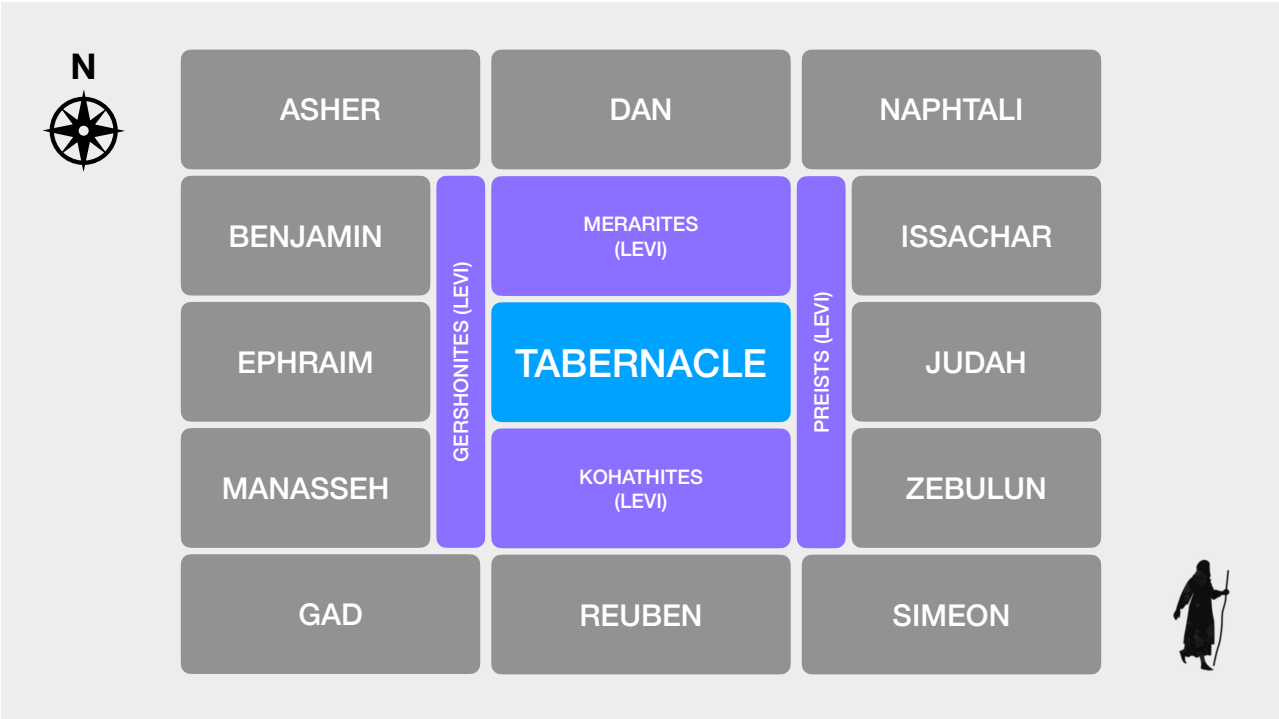
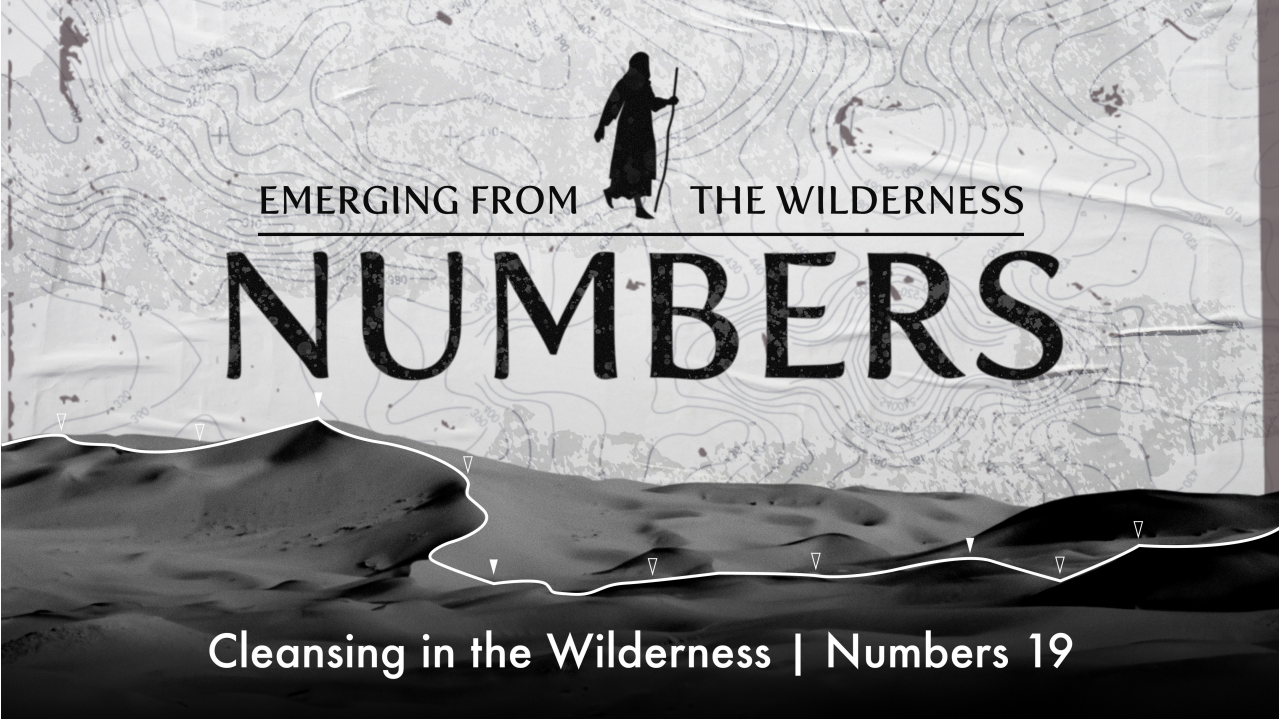
Numbers 19:11–13



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.

Numbers 19:11–13





“The major danger in becoming unclean lay in coming into contact with the holy, for holiness is powerful, consuming all that is unclean.”

**IVP Dictionary of the
Old Testament Pentateuch**



“Death was so defiling because, on the one hand, it was the opposite of life/holiness and, on the other hand, it was the punishment on all humans for the brazen disobedience of the first humans against God (Gen 2:17).”

**IVP Dictionary of the
Old Testament Pentateuch**



CLEANSING IN THE WILDERNESS:

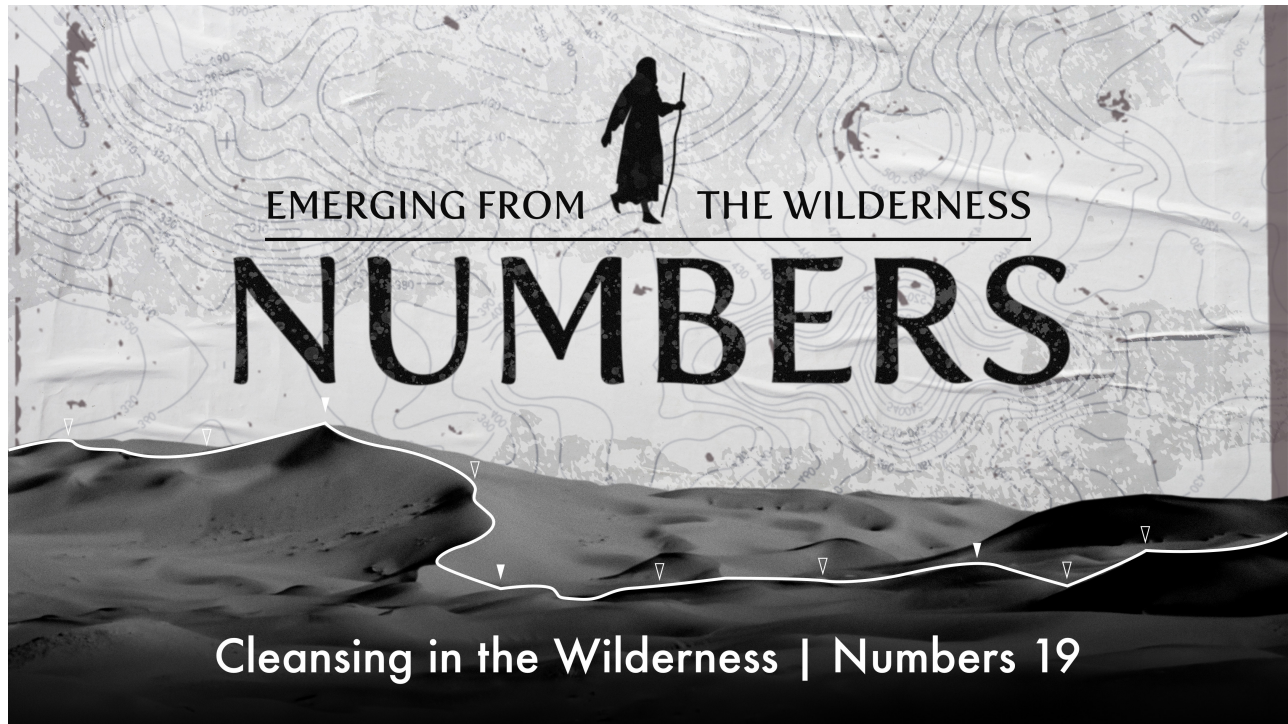
1. **The Recipe:**
Instructions for Making the Ashes
2. **The Procedure:**
Instructions for Using the Ashes
3. **The Application:**
What does this mean for Christians?



CLEANSING IN THE WILDERNESS:

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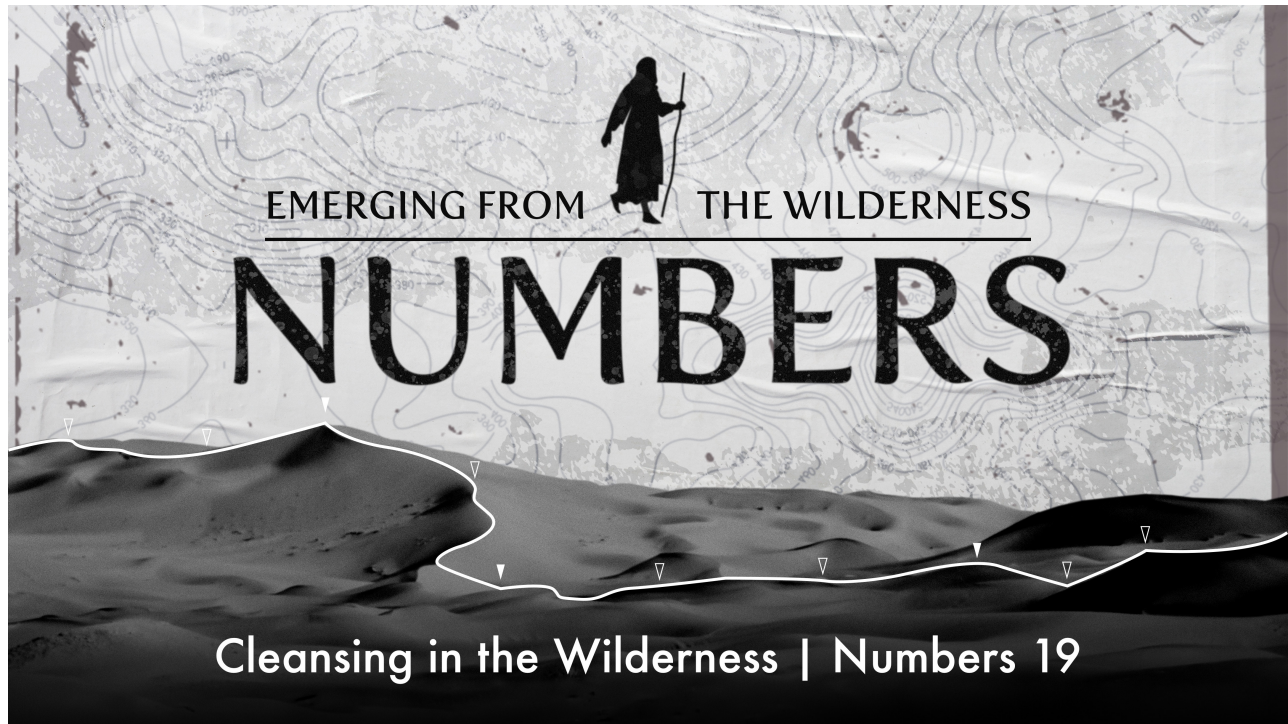




Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.

Hebrews 9:22





And this shall be a perpetual statute for the people of Israel, and for the stranger who sojourns among them.

Numbers 19:10b



CLEANSING IN THE WILDERNESS:

1. The Recipe:
Instructions for Making the Ashes
2. The Procedure:
Instructions for Using the Ashes
3. The Application:
What does this mean for Christians?



“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.

Numbers 19:20



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

Numbers 19:17-19



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.

Numbers 19:17-19



And it shall be a statute forever for them.

Numbers 19:21a



CLEANSING IN THE WILDERNESS:

1. The Recipe:
Instructions for Making the Ashes
2. The Procedure:
Instructions for Using the Ashes
3. **The Application:**
What does this mean for Christians?



“Though this provision is meant to be portable and convenient, a kind of instant-coffee type of cleansing (“just add water”), the people need to understand that death is still required for cleansing. However, this provision only deals with ceremonial cleansing, cleansing that is outward. It does not and cannot deal with inward impurity.

Adrian Reynolds



The people cannot approach God ceremonially unclean, but the provision of cleansing in Numbers 19 is still unable to deal with the heart and ‘consciences from acts that lead to death’ (Heb. 9:14) leaving us crying out for a better sacrifice.

Adrian Reynolds



Everybody knows that however good instant coffee is, it is never as good as the real thing. It is convenient, portable and quick, but just not as tasty. It never smells as good. Death is a real problem for Israel and this clever and useful provision deals with the ceremonial problem. But it cannot address the deeper issue."

Adrian Reynolds

A topographic map with contour lines and elevation numbers (e.g., 390, 380, 370, 360, 350, 340, 330, 320, 310, 300, 290, 280, 270, 260, 250, 240, 230, 220, 210, 200, 190, 180, 170, 160, 150, 140, 130, 120, 110, 100, 90, 80, 70, 60, 50, 40, 30, 20, 10, 0) serves as the background. A black silhouette of a person with a staff is centered in the upper half of the map.

EMERGING FROM THE WILDERNESS

NUMBERS

A black silhouette of a person with a staff is centered in the upper half of the map.

Cleansing in the Wilderness | Numbers 19

For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

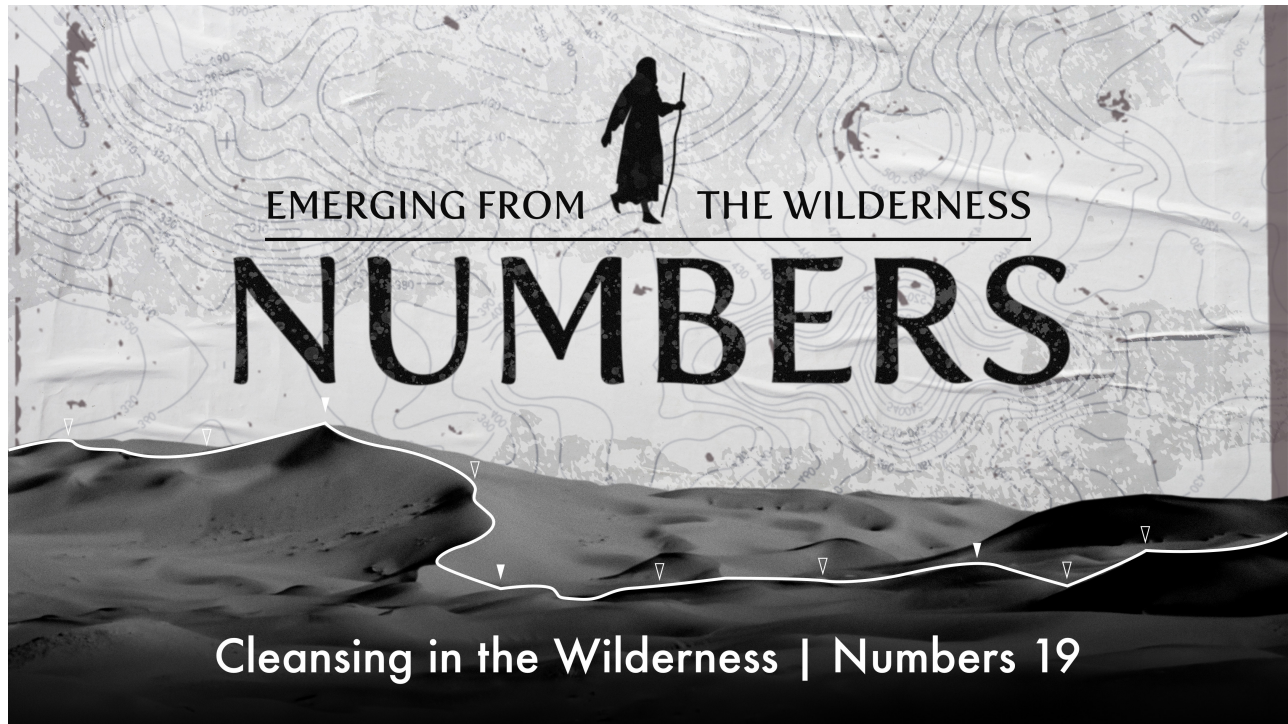
Hebrews 10:4



¹³ For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the sprinkling of defiled persons with the ashes of a heifer, sanctify for the purification of the flesh, ¹⁴ how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Hebrews 9:13–14





The Application:
What does this mean for Christians?



The Application:

What does this mean for Christians?

1. We have a death problem, too.



The Application:

What does this mean for Christians?

1. We have a death problem, too.
2. Jesus purifies us from all uncleanness.



The Application:

What does this mean for Christians?

1. We have a death problem, too.
2. Jesus purifies us from all uncleanness.
3. It shall be a statute forever.

