

Numbers 9:6-8

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/num/num-9/numbers-96-8/>

In verses 6 – 8, an issue arose when Moses commanded the people to celebrate the Passover. There were men who had handled a dead body and thus were prohibited from observing the Passover. They confronted Moses with this problem, and Moses told them that he would ask the LORD what was to be done.

In light of the instructions concerning the Passover in verses 1 – 5, a problem needed to be taken care of. The problem was that *there were some men who were unclean because of the dead person, so that they could not observe Passover on that day* (v. 6). Touching a dead body made a person unclean ceremonially (Numbers 5:2, 19:11) and thus were not eligible to participate in the Passover celebration. Because people in the camp would die on or near Passover, this was a common occurrence.

Because this was so important, the men affected by this problem approached Moses and *said to him, “Though we are unclean because of the dead person, why are we restrained from presenting the offering of the Lord at its appointed time among the sons of Israel?”* (v. 7). The impasse was that all Israelites were commanded to observe the Passover at the appointed time, but all those who handled a dead body were prevented from doing so because they were ceremonially unclean.

These men were caught between two commands, so they did the correct thing and talked to Moses about how to resolve the issue. Moses told them to *wait* (v. 8), and that he would *listen to what the Lord will command concerning you* (v. 8). Only the Lawgiver Himself could resolve this.

Biblical Text

⁶ But there were *some* men who were unclean because of *the* dead person, so that they could not observe Passover on that day; so they came before Moses and Aaron on that day. ⁷ Those men said to him, “*Though* we are unclean because of *the* dead person, why are we restrained from presenting the offering of the Lord at its appointed time among the sons of Israel?” ⁸ Moses therefore said to them, “Wait, and I will listen to what the Lord will command concerning you.”