

Exodus 19:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the LORD said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes,

Analysis

And the LORD said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes,

Meeting God requires preparation—holiness isn't casual. 'Sanctify' (קדשׁת, qiddashtam) means to set apart, consecrate, make holy. The two-day preparation period creates anticipation and underscores the gravity of divine encounter. Washing clothes (כִּבְשׁוּ שְׁמִלְתָּמָד, kibbesu simlotam) symbolizes moral purity—external cleanliness representing internal consecration. The ritual speaks: you cannot approach God in your ordinary, defiled state. The New Testament echoes this: 'without holiness no one will see the Lord' (Hebrews 12:14). While Christ's blood sanctifies us positionally, progressive sanctification remains essential for deeper communion with God.

Historical Context

Ritual washings were common in ancient Near Eastern religions, but Israel's washings pointed beyond ceremony to moral transformation. Archaeological evidence shows ancient Israelites used mikvehs (ritual baths) for ceremonial cleansing.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does the two-day preparation period challenge modern assumptions about casual approaches to God?
2. What does washing clothes symbolize about the nature of holiness required to meet with God?

Interlinear Text

בְּעֵם אָל לְרַב מִשְׁהָ אֶל יְהִי הָאָמֵר
unto the people unto Moses unto the LORD said

said

And the LORD

H413

unto Moses

H1980

H413

unto the people

H5971

שְׁמַלְתָּם: וְלֹא־שְׁמַלְתָּם וְלֹא־שְׁמַלְתָּם
their clothes and let them wash and to morrow and them to day sanctify and

and sanctify

them to day

and to morrow

and let them wash

their clothes

H6942

H3117

H4279

H3526

H8071

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 10:22 (Parallel theme): Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

Genesis 35:2 (Parallel theme): Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments:

Leviticus 11:25 (Parallel theme): And whosoever beareth ought of the carcase of them shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even.

1 Corinthians 6:11 (References Lord): And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

Leviticus 15:5 (Parallel theme): And whosoever toucheth his bed shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even.

Numbers 8:21 (References Lord): And the Levites were purified, and they washed their clothes; and Aaron offered them as an offering before the LORD; and Aaron made an atonement for them to cleanse them.

Joshua 3:5 (References Lord): And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves: for to morrow the LORD will do wonders among you.

Numbers 8:7 (Parallel theme): And thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of purifying upon them, and let them shave all their flesh, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean.

Revelation 7:14 (Parallel theme): And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Joshua 7:13 (References Lord): Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against to morrow: for thus saith the LORD God of Israel, There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you.