

# Judges 19:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And her lord rose up in the morning, and opened the doors of the house, and went out to go his way: and, behold, the woman his concubine was fallen down at the door of the house, and her hands were upon the threshold.

## Analysis

**And her lord rose up in the morning, and opened the doors of the house, and went out to go his way: and, behold, the woman his concubine was fallen down at the door of the house, and her hands were upon the threshold.** The Levite's callousness shocks. "Her lord rose up in the morning" (vayaqom adoneyha baboqer, וַיָּקוּם אֲדֹנֶיהָ בַּבֹּקֶר) suggests he slept peacefully while she suffered. "Opened the doors... and went out to go his way" (vayyiftach daltot habait vayyetse laleket ledarko, וַיִּפְתַּח דַּלְתוֹת הַבַּיִת וַיֵּצֵא לֵלֶכֶת לְדַרְכּוֹ) indicates he intended to leave without checking on her—the phrase "to go his way" suggests indifference to her fate.

"Behold" (vehinneh, וְהִנֵּה) marks shocking discovery. "The woman his concubine was fallen down" (ha'ishah pilagsho nofelet, הָאִשָּׁה פִּילָגְשׁוֹ נֹפֶלֶת) uses a participle suggesting she lay collapsed. Most haunting: "her hands were upon the threshold" (veyadeyha al-hasaf, וַיְיָדֶיהָ עַל-הַסֵּף). The threshold (saf, סף) represents the boundary between safety and danger. Her outstretched hands suggest she died reaching for safety, for her "lord" who should have protected her but instead sacrificed her.

The narrative's restraint makes the horror more powerful. No editorial comment condemns the Levite; the facts speak. He handed his concubine to rapists to save himself, slept while she was brutalized, and prepared to leave without concern. Reformed theology recognizes this as exposing the depth of human depravity—

religious leaders are not exempt from profound moral failure. The Levite's subsequent actions—cutting her body into pieces and sending them through Israel (v. 29)—show he weaponized her suffering for political purposes rather than mourning her death. This contrasts utterly with Christ the Good Shepherd who "giveth his life for the sheep" (John 10:11) rather than sacrificing the vulnerable to save Himself.

## Historical Context

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The threshold held symbolic significance in ancient Near Eastern thought—it marked the boundary of the household's protection. Archaeological excavations reveal thresholds sometimes had dedicatory deposits or inscriptions, marking them as liminal sacred spaces. The concubine's hands on the threshold thus carry theological weight—she reached for the boundary of safety but was denied entry. Ancient readers would recognize the Levite's failure: a man's honor demanded protecting household members, especially women under his authority. His survival while she died outside inverted proper order. The Hebrew term *pilegish* (פִּלְגִּישׁ, "concubine") indicated a wife of secondary status, lacking full bride-price and inheritance rights. While legally married, concubines had fewer protections—as this narrative tragically demonstrates.

## Related Passages

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**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

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1. How does the Levite's indifference to his concubine's fate while he slept safely expose the spiritual bankruptcy of external religious status without genuine love?
2. What does the image of her hands on the threshold reveal about those who reach for safety and protection but are denied it by those who should provide it?

3. How does Christ's willing sacrifice of Himself to save His people provide ultimate contrast to the Levite's sacrifice of another to save himself?

## Interlinear Text

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וַיִּקָּם	אֲדֹנָי יְהוֹיָכִן	בַּבֹּקֶר	וַיִּפְתַּח	דִּלְתוֹת	הַבַּיִת
rose up	And her lord	in the morning	and opened	the doors	of the house
H6965	H1113	H1242	H6605	H1817	H1004
וַיֵּצֵא	לְלֶכֶת	לְדֶרֶךְ	וַיַּבְהִי	הָאִשָּׁה	פִּילְגָּשׁוֹ
and went out		his way	and behold the woman		his concubine
H3318	H1980	H1870	H2009	H802	H6370
נָפְלָה	פֶּתַח	הַבַּיִת	וַיִּדּוּ	עַל	
was fallen down	at the door	of the house	and her hands		
H5307	H6607	H1004	H3027	H5921	
הָיָה:					
were upon the threshold					
H5592					

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