

# Numbers 19:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

This is the ordinance of the law which the LORD hath commanded, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring thee a red heifer without spot, wherein is no blemish, and upon which never came yoke:

## Analysis

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The red heifer ordinance presents a unique paradox in Levitical law: the purifying agent itself causes ceremonial uncleanness to those who prepare it (v.7-8). This foreshadows Christ's paradoxical work - He who knew no sin became sin for us (2 Cor 5:21). The Hebrew 'parah adumah' (red heifer) must be completely red, without blemish, and never yoked - symbolizing the sinless, unblemished Christ who took our yoke upon Himself. The ashes mixed with water created 'waters of separation' (mei niddah), pointing to baptism's cleansing power through Christ's sacrifice.

## Historical Context

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Given during Israel's wilderness wanderings, this ordinance addressed the frequent occurrence of death in the camp and provided purification for corpse contamination. The red heifer was slaughtered outside the camp (v.3), anticipating Christ's crucifixion outside Jerusalem's walls (Heb 13:11-12). Archaeological evidence suggests red heifers were extremely rare, making this ordinance costly and emphasizing the precious nature of purification.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

## Study Questions

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1. How does the paradox of the red heifer (purifying others while defiling the priests) help you understand Christ's substitutionary atonement?
2. In what ways do you need the 'waters of separation' to cleanse you from contact with spiritual death?

## Interlinear Text

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וְאַתָּה	זֶה	מְצָרָת	מְצָרָת	בְּתוּךְ	בְּתוּךְ	אָשֶׁר	צִוָּה	יְהִי	יְהִי
H2063	This is the ordinance	H2708	of the law	H8451	H834	hath commanded	which the LORD		
						H6680		H3068	
רֹאשׁ	רֹאשׁ	רֹאשׁ	רֹאשׁ	רֹאשׁ	רֹאשׁ	וְשָׁבָא	וְשָׁבָא	אַל	אַל
saying	Speak	H413	unto the children	H1121	H834	of Israel	that they bring	H413	
H559	H1696					H3478	H3947		
בְּבִנֵּי	בְּבִנֵּי	בְּבִנֵּי	בְּבִנֵּי	בְּבִנֵּי	בְּבִנֵּי	וְשָׁבָא	וְשָׁבָא	אַל	אַל
בָּקָר	בָּקָר	בָּקָר	בָּקָר	בָּקָר	בָּקָר	בָּקָר	בָּקָר	בָּקָר	בָּקָר
heifer	thee a red	without spot		H8549	H834	Ash	Ash	H0	M
H6510	H122					H369	H3971		and
בְּבִנֵּי	בְּבִנֵּי	בְּבִנֵּי	בְּבִנֵּי	בְּבִנֵּי	בְּבִנֵּי	בְּבִנֵּי	בְּבִנֵּי		וְשָׁבָא
עַל	עַל	עַל	עַל	עַל	עַל	עַל	עַל		וְשָׁבָא
אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר	אֲשֶׁר		
H834	and upon which never		came	H5927	H5921	came	came		
	H3808								

## Additional Cross-References

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**Deuteronomy 21:3** (Parallel theme): And it shall be, that the city which is next unto the slain man, even the elders of that city shall take an heifer, which hath not been wrought with, and which hath not drawn in the yoke;

**1 Samuel 6:7** (Parallel theme): Now therefore make a new cart, and take two milch kine, on which there hath come no yoke, and tie the kine to the cart, and bring their calves home from them:

**1 Peter 1:19** (Parallel theme): But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

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