

# Numbers 19:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And whatsoever the unclean person toucheth shall be unclean; and the soul that toucheth it shall be unclean until even.

## Analysis

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**And whatsoever the unclean person toucheth shall be unclean; and the soul that toucheth it shall be unclean until the even**—The contagious nature of ritual uncleanness (טָמֵא tame) is emphasized by the double use of **unclean**—both the object touched and the person touching become defiled. The phrase **until the even** (עַד־הָעֶרֶב ad-ha'arev) establishes temporal limitation—uncleanness wasn't permanent but required purification before nightfall.

This verse concludes the red heifer regulations (Numbers 19), which provided purification for corpse contamination—the most severe form of ritual uncleanness. The elaborate cleansing ritual (ashes of red heifer mixed with water, sprinkled on the defiled) foreshadows Christ's blood that 'purges the conscience from dead works to serve the living God' (Hebrews 9:13-14), providing cleansing unavailable through mere ceremonial washings.

## Historical Context

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The red heifer ritual (Numbers 19) addressed Israel's frequent exposure to death during wilderness wandering and ongoing life in Canaan. Unlike other offerings performed at the tabernacle, red heifer ashes were prepared outside the camp and stored for ongoing purification needs, making cleansing available continuously.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

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1. How does the contagious nature of uncleanness (spreading by mere touch) illustrate sin's corrupting influence?
2. What does the temporal limitation ('until evening') teach about the availability of cleansing versus permanent defilement?
3. How does the red heifer's cleansing from death-contamination point forward to Christ's purging of the conscience from 'dead works'?

## Interlinear Text

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ל	אֲשֶׁר	הִנֵּג עַת	בּוֹ	הַטֹּמֶה אֵל	
H3605	H834	person toucheth	H0	And whatsoever the unclean	
		H5060		H2931	
	תִּטְמָא אֵל	וְהִנֵּג פֶּשַׁע	הִנֵּג עַת	תִּטְמָא אֵל	עַד
	it shall be unclean	and the soul	person toucheth	it shall be unclean	H5704
	H2930	H5315	H5060	H2930	
	הָעֶרֶב:				
	until even				
	H6153				

## Additional Cross-References

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**Haggai 2:13** (Parallel theme): Then said Haggai, If one that is unclean by a dead body touch any of these, shall it be unclean? And the priests answered and said, It shall be unclean.

**Leviticus 7:19** (Parallel theme): And the flesh that toucheth any unclean thing shall not be eaten; it shall be burnt with fire: and as for the flesh, all that be clean shall eat thereof.

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