

Numbers 19:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then the priest shall wash his clothes, and he shall bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp, and the priest shall be unclean until the even.

Analysis

The priest who conducted the ceremony became unclean until evening despite his holy service. This paradox—the purifying agent contaminating those who handle it—reveals that Old Covenant rituals could not permanently resolve death's pollution. Christ alone, as priest who offered Himself, remained undefiled while bearing our uncleanness (Hebrews 7:26).

Historical Context

This temporary contamination applied to everyone involved in the ritual (verses 7-10), demonstrating the inadequacy of the system itself. The best Old Covenant provisions couldn't fully remove death's taint; they only provided temporary, ceremonial cleansing pointing to something better.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How do the limitations of Old Covenant rituals help you appreciate New Covenant realities?
2. What does Christ's remaining undefiled while bearing sin teach about His unique nature?

Interlinear Text

וְכָבַשׁ	בְּגָדָיו	הַכֹּהֵן	וְרָחַץ	בְּשָׁרוֹ	בַּמַּיִם
shall wash	his clothes	Then the priest	and he shall bathe	his flesh	in water
H3526	H899	H3548	H7364	H1320	H4325
וְאַחֲרָיִם	יָבֹא	אֵל	הַמִּחֲנֶה	וְטָמֵא	הַכֹּהֵן
and afterward	he shall come	H413	into the camp	shall be unclean	Then the priest
H310	H935		H4264	H2930	H3548
עַד	הָעֶרֶב:				
H5704	until the even				
	H6153				

Additional Cross-References

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