

Ransom Money

Exodus 30:11-16

11 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: 12 "When you take the census of the children of Israel for their number, then every man shall give a ransom for himself to the LORD, when you number them, that there may be no plague among them when you number them. 13 This is what everyone among those who are numbered shall give: half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary (a shekel is twenty gerahs). The half-shekel shall be an offering to the LORD. 14 Everyone included among those who are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering to the LORD. 15 The rich shall not give more and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when you give an offering to the LORD, to make atonement for yourselves. 16 And you shall take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shall appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of meeting, that it may be a memorial for the children of Israel before the LORD, to make atonement for yourselves."

This is a very interesting passage. We have learned about animal sacrifices for an atonement or ransom (same Hebrew word) but now we find money used in reference to atonement.

- I. The census
 - A. This ransom money is only in reference to the census that Moses is to take among the children of Israel.
 1. There are two instances of this census.
 2. The first, mentioned here is actually taken in Numbers 1 and Numbers 26.
 3. First after they left Sinai and once again after the 40 years of wondering.
 - B. David also numbers the people but without a ransom and God brings a plague upon the people.
 1. 1 Chronicles 21
- II. The half-shekel shall be an offering to the LORD v-13
 - A. We noticed early on that the tabernacle was to be built with material freely donated for that purpose.
 1. Ex 25: 2 "Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering. From everyone who gives it willingly with his heart you shall take My offering. 3 "And this is the offering which you shall take from them: gold, silver, and bronze; 4 "blue, purple, and scarlet thread, fine linen, and goats' hair; 5 "ram skins dyed red, badger skins, and acacia wood; 6 "oil for the light, and spices for the anointing oil and for the sweet incense; 7 "onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate. 8 "And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.
 2. But now this is a required offering and is no longer considered a free will offering.

- B. The amount was a half-shekel.
 - 1. This was a small amount that anyone could pay.
 - 2. But the rich could give no more and the poor could give no less.
 - 3. Everyone is equally guilty before God.
 - a. All have sinned and fallen short.
 - b. All we like sheep have gone astray.
 - c. There is not a just man on earth that does good and does not sin.
 - d. So then with out a ransom each one of us standing before God would hear the words guilty, guilty, guilty.
 - 4. All then require a ransom.
 - a. That was the problem with the proud Pharisees of Jesus' day. They did not need to be ransomed, the were never in bondage.
 - b. But they were in bondage, in bondage to sin.
 - c. We know from the teachings of the New Testament that Jesus paid the ransom of our souls.

III. What was done with this first atonement money offering?

- A. It was used to make the silver foundation for the tabernacle.
 - 1. Exodus 26:17-30
 - 2. The foundation of a building usually lies out of sight where no one can see it.
 - 3. But it is a necessary thing.
 - 4. The basis of the work of Jesus is the fact that we are all sinners.
 - 5. That foundation says every person ever born except Jesus needs the redemption work of Jesus.

Its typical significance is simply the truth which is found in every page of Scripture; viz., that all men need a ransom for their souls. OLB