

Exodus 30:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the LORD, when thou numberest them; that there be no plague among them, when thou numberest them.

Analysis

The half-shekel atonement money (ransom for souls) demonstrates that all are equally valued before God—rich and poor pay the same. No one can pay more or less for their soul; redemption has fixed price. This prefigures how Christ's atonement has equal value for all—not more for the worthy, not less for the unworthy. The silver (redemption metal) collected supported tabernacle service, showing that redeemed people fund God's ongoing work.

Historical Context

The half-shekel (approximately 0.2 ounces of silver) was collected during census-taking, serving both as atonement money and practical support for the tabernacle. This became an annual temple tax in later periods.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. What does equal payment (rich and poor) teach about the equality of Christ's redemption?
2. How do redeemed people support God's ongoing work in the world?

Interlinear Text

כִּי	תֶשֶׁא	אֶת	רֹאשׁ	בְּנֵי	יִשְׂרָאֵל
H3588	When thou takest	H853	the sum	of the children	of Israel
	H5375		H7218	H1121	H3478
בְּפֶקֶד דָּ	וְנָתַן וְ	אֶת	כָּל	נַפְשׁוֹ	
after their number	then shall they give	every man	a ransom	for his soul	
H6485	H5414	H376	H3724	H5315	
לַיהוָה	בְּפֶקֶד דָּ	אֶת	וְלֹא	יְהִי הָ	בָּהֶם
unto the LORD	after their number	H853	H3808	H1961	H0
H3068	H6485				
וְלֹא	בְּפֶקֶד דָּ	אֶת			
them that there be no plague	after their number	H853			
H5063	H6485				

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 31:50 (References Lord): We have therefore brought an oblation for the LORD, what every man hath gotten, of jewels of gold, chains, and bracelets, rings, earrings, and tablets, to make an atonement for our souls before the LORD.

1 Chronicles 27:24 (References Israel): Joab the son of Zeruiah began to number, but he finished not, because there fell wrath for it against Israel; neither was the number put in the account of the chronicles of king David.

Psalms 49:7 (Redemption): None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him:

Matthew 20:28 (Redemption): Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org