

Exodus 38:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

A bekah for every man, that is, half a shekel, after the shekel of the sanctuary, for every one that went to be numbered, from twenty years old and upward, for six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty men.

Analysis

The precise calculation—'a bekah for every man' (בְּקָעַל גָּלוֹת, beka la-gulgoleth, 'half-shekel per head')—demonstrates exact accountability. The phrase 'from twenty years old and upward, for six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty men' provides census total: 603,550 men of military age. This specific number multiplied by half-shekel equals the silver total (v. 25), demonstrating mathematical precision in the accounting. The exactness teaches that God's redemption is comprehensive—every person counted, every ransom recorded, every contribution applied to the foundation.

Historical Context

The census number (603,550) matches the Exodus population count (Exodus 12:37, Numbers 1:46), confirming consistent biblical record. The bekah (half-shekel) per man over twenty years old established that adults bore responsibility for their own atonement, while heads of households likely paid for dependents. This tax funded the tabernacle foundation—making every Israelite literally foundational to God's dwelling.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. What does the exact correspondence between counted men and collected silver teach about God's comprehensive, precise redemption?
2. How does every Israelite contributing to the foundation illustrate that every believer's redemption supports the whole church structure?

Interlinear Text

לְכָל בְּקָרְבָּן דְּשָׁבָת בְּשָׁלָמָה לְתַהְתָּרְבּוּת בְּקָרְבָּן
A bekah for every man that is half a shekel a shekel of the sanctuary H3605

H1235 H1538 H4276 H8255 H8255 H6944

שָׁנָה עָשָׂר יָמִים מִבְּנֵי פֶּקַד יָמִים עַל קָרְבָּן ר
years from twenty old to be numbered for every one that went H5921 H6485 H1121 H6242 H8141

H5674 H5921 H6485 H1121 H6242 H8141

וְחַמְשָׁה שָׁנִים אֶלְף יָמִים וְשָׁלֹשׁ שָׁתִים מֵאָה וּתְשׁוׂעָה תְּמִשְׁבֵּחַ עַל
and five thousand and three thousand and three hundred and fifty years H4605 H8337 H3967 H505 H7969 H505 H2568

H4605 H8337 H3967 H505 H7969 H505 H2568

וְחַמְשָׁים: מֵאָה וּתְשׁוׂעָה

hundred and fifty H3967 H2572

Additional Cross-References

Numbers 1:46 (Parallel theme): Even all they that were numbered were six hundred thousand and three thousand and five hundred and fifty.

Exodus 30:13 (Temple): This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary: (a shekel is twenty gerahs:) an half shekel shall be the offering of the LORD.

Exodus 12:37 (Parallel theme): And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children.

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