

Numbers 3:44

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

Analysis

The LORD speaking unto Moses initiates God's solution to the redemption arithmetic. When Israelite firstborn males (22,273, verse 43) exceeded Levites (22,000, verse 39), a gap of 273 required atonement. God's specific command for their redemption demonstrates that every soul has value and requires proper accounting before God. The numerical precision teaches divine omniscience—God knows each individual. This foreshadows the doctrine that Christ knows each of His elect by name (John 10:3, 14), and His redemption precisely covers all whom the Father gave Him (John 17:12).

Historical Context

The firstborn redemption recalled the Passover when God struck Egypt's firstborn but spared Israel's (Exodus 12:29). Every Israelite firstborn consequently belonged to God as consecrated (Exodus 13:2). The Levite substitution provided practical redemption, but where numbers fell short, silver completed the redemption. This two-fold redemption—personal (Levite) and financial (silver)—pictured the perfect redemption in Christ who is both substitute and payment.

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does God's precision in redemption (accounting for all 273 excess) comfort believers about their salvation?
2. What does the dual redemption (Levites plus silver) teach about Christ's complete atonement?
3. How should we think about the 'redemption arithmetic'—Christ's payment sufficient for all whom God calls?

Interlinear Text

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|------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| וַיִּדֹבֶר | יְהוָה | אֶל | מֹשֶׁה | לֵאמֹר: |
| spake | And the LORD | ^{H413} | unto Moses | saying |
| ^{H1696} | ^{H3068} | | ^{H4872} | ^{H559} |

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