

“The Ransom Paid”  
Exodus 30:11-16  
(Preached at Trinity, February 8, 2009)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. I pointed out before **Chapter 30** deals with God’s further instruction concerning the Tabernacle worship.
  - In **Verses 1-10** we read God’s instructions concerning the altar of incense
  - In **Verses 11-16** we find instruction concerning the ransom money required of Israel.
  - In **Verses 17-21** – we read of the laver of brass which was set up for the cleansing of the priests.
  - Finally, in **Verses 34-38** we find instruction for the incense and perfume to be used in the Tabernacle.
2. Last week we focused on the first section: the altar of incense. As we saw the Altar of Incense was placed directly before the Ark of the Covenant; directly before the Mercy Seat, the throne of God. It was placed directly before the Mercy Seat, except the veil separated the Altar of Incense from the Ark.
3. As we’ve seen, the elements of the Tabernacle were designed to teach Israel some important truths and as God’s New Covenant people, they teach us some wonderful truths. The Altar of Incense symbolized the saint coming before the throne of God in prayer. The prayers of the saints rise up as a sweet fragrance before the throne of God. **Revelation 8:3-4** – “And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer *it* with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.  
<sup>4</sup> And the smoke of the incense, *which came* with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.”
4. As we come to **Verses 11-16** we find instructions concerning the ransom money required of Israel.
5. These verses record the taking of a census. This was by the direction of God.
  - A. A census was taken on various occasions. We find another example of a census in **Numbers 1**. A census was taken to determine the number of men able to fight. **Numbers 1:1-3** – “And the LORD spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the tabernacle of the congregation, on the first *day* of the second month, in the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt, saying, <sup>2</sup> Take ye the sum of all the congregation of the children of Israel, after their families, by the house of their fathers, with the number of *their* names, every male by their polls; <sup>3</sup> From twenty years old and upward, all that are able to go forth to war in Israel: thou and Aaron shall number them by their armies.  
(Notice it says number the males from 20 years old and up)
  - B. The taking of the census was a very serious occasion. The proper procedure was a matter of life and death.

**Exodus 30:12** – “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.”

- C. God ordered it done a certain way. All the men were to gather on one side and then numbered as they passed to the other side. As they passed they were to drop a half shekel of silver into a pile.
6. The seriousness of numbering the people can be seen during the reign of David when he conducted an unauthorized census.  
**2 Samuel 24:10** – “And David's heart smote him after that he had numbered the people. And David said unto the LORD, I have sinned greatly in that I have done: and now, I beseech thee, O LORD, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly.”
- David numbered them presumptuously without God’s command.
  - He demonstrated a trust in the size of his armies and was smitten with pride over their size.
  - And he failed to collect the half shekel as a ransom price.
- Seventy thousand people died of a plague as the result of David’s folly.
7. God commanded that a half shekel of silver be collected during the census. The silver was then used to provide for the operation of the Tabernacle. This was most likely the basis of the Temple tax spoken of in the NT.  
**Matthew 17:24 -27** – “And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute *money* came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? <sup>25</sup> He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? <sup>26</sup> Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. <sup>27</sup> Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.
- The coin would have been the weight of a shekel – ½ for Jesus and ½ for Peter.
8. Why was this collection called a “ransom?”  
**Exodus 30:12** – “. . . then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the LORD”
- A. This is a difficult question.  
 Surely it does not mean that they were purchasing their redemption with their money  
**Isaiah 55:1** – “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.”
- B. Still, it is called a ransom.  
**Exodus 30:12** – “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.”  
**Exodus 30:15** – “The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when *they* give an offering unto the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls.”

9. A ransom points to the price of redemption. It points to the glorious redemption of our Lord Jesus.

I. This redemption money reminded Israel that they were sinners – guilty and convicted

A. How could God be angry at Israel?

1. Were they not His chosen people? His precious treasure?
2. God was teaching them that He was offended at them
3. His wrath was kindled against them  
**Exodus 30:12** – “. . . that there be no plague among them”
4. God had not come to chose the righteous, but sinners

B. A price had to be paid

1. God’s wrath had to be appeased – a price had to be paid
2. Once a year on the Day of Atonement a sacrifice of propitiation had to be made showing them their need of a sacrifice
3. This offering was atonement money showing them their need for a price to be paid
4. Everyone had to pay the same price because all were equally guilty before God. There were no exemptions. A shekel, by the way, was less than a dollar. The point was the recognition of the need of a ransom – but it was not sufficient to provide a permanent relief.
5. This points us to the infinite value of Christ’s redemption – for us, however, it is free.  
**1 Peter 1:18-19** – “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; <sup>19</sup> But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

There is another wonderful truth being taught in this census and ransom.

II. First of all, we have to understand the nature of our fall into sin

A. With sin we came under the dominion of Satan

1. Satan was given power over the nations. He held them bound under a great delusion and deception.
2. Paul describes our lost condition as being under the power of the prince of the power of the air.  
**Ephesians 2:2** – “Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.”
3. Paul even describes Satan as the god of this world who has blinded humanity in unbelief  
**2 Corinthians 4:3-4** – “But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: <sup>4</sup> In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.”

4. Paul described the work of the Gospel as delivering men from Satan's captivity.  
**2 Timothy 2:24-25** – “And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all *men*, apt to teach, patient, <sup>25</sup> In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; <sup>26</sup> And *that* they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.”
- B. When Jesus came He laid waste Satan's dominion
1. Jesus often referred to this. He described it as entering into the strong man's house and plundering it.  
**Matthew 12:28-29** – “But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. <sup>29</sup> Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.”
  2. When His disciples marveled at their ability to cast out demons Jesus described Satan's great fall.  
**Luke 10:17-19** – “And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. <sup>18</sup> And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. <sup>19</sup> Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.”
  3. This is the great binding of Satan described in **Revelation 21**  
**Revelation 20:1-3** – “And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. <sup>2</sup> And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, <sup>3</sup> And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.”
- C. All of this was made possible through the death of Christ
1. His death assured Satan's destruction.
  2. His death crushed Satan's dominion  
**Colossians 2:15** – “*And* having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.”
  3. He is the King of kings  
**Hebrews 2:8** – “Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing *that is* not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.”

**Ephesians 1:20-22** – “Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*, <sup>21</sup> Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: <sup>22</sup> And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church,”

4. The death of Christ is referred to as a ransom

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

**1 Timothy 2:5-6** – “For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; <sup>6</sup> Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”

III. This collection of ransom money was an indication of God’s ownership over Israel

A. Only the owner has the right to take inventory

1. The farmer takes a count of his own livestock. A grocer takes inventory of his own stock
2. This census was a demonstration of authority. God was the owner of Israel
  - a. God chose Abraham and raised up a seed from him by covenant
  - b. These were God’s people – God’s possession
 

**Exodus 3:7** – “And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which *are* in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;”
  - c. One of Pharaoh’s crimes was touching that which belonged to God
 

**Exodus 5:1** – “Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness.”
3. This is what made David’s act so evil.
  - a. It was Satan’s attack upon God’s sovereign authority
 

**1 Chronicles 21:1** – “And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.”
  - b. With David’s repentance came the declaration that he was in the hands of God
 

**2 Samuel 24:14** – “And David said unto Gad, I am in a great strait: let us fall now into the hand of the LORD; for his mercies *are* great: and let me not fall into the hand of man.”
4. Only God has the authority to number His people.
 

**Exodus 30:11** – “And the LORD spake unto Moses”

B. Of all the nations on the face of the earth, only Israel was the particular possession of God.

1. The census reminded Israel that they were set apart, they belonged to God  
The census was God’s numbering of His possession
2. The ransom was symbolic of God’s deliverance of His people from the grip of Satan

C. This deliverance was ultimately fulfilled under the New Covenant

1. Jesus has ransomed us from the grasp of Satan
  2. Satan no longer has authority over us
  
  3. This was the nature of Jesus' battle with Satan in the wilderness  
Satan was seeking for Jesus to submit to his authority  
**Matthew 4:8-11** – “Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; <sup>9</sup> And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. <sup>10</sup> Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. <sup>11</sup> Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.”
  3. Satan seeks to gain dominion over us
- D. We have been delivered from his rule
1. Jesus now has dominion over us. He is our Lord and Master
  2. He has bought us  
**1 Corinthians 6:19-20** – “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? <sup>20</sup> For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.”

#### Conclusion:

1. If we aren't ransomed we are not His. We are not numbered among His people. Anyone in Israel who didn't pay the ransom was cut off.
2. What manner of people must we be in light of these truths?  
Since we are bought with the high price of our Lord's own blood we must glorify God in all things.
3. A knowledge of our Redeemer should be a powerful restraint upon our behavior. We are a people under authority. We are under the dominion of Christ.