

Title: **ENTERING THE LORD'S COURTS**

Text: Exodus 38:1-31

Subject: *Worshipping God*

Date: Tuesday Evening — January 26, 2009

Tape: Exodus #116

Readings: *Bobbie Estes and Allen Kibby*

Introduction:

Do you hope to dwell in the courts of the Lord's house forever? Is it your joy to sing with David, "*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever*"? I want to talk to you tonight about **ENTERING THE LORD'S COURTS**.

- I want to talk to you, personally.
- I want to talk to you from the Word of God.
- I want to talk to you from the Word of God about entering the courts of the Lord, about worshipping God in sweet communion, both while you live in this world and forever in the world to come.

(Psalms 96:8-9) "Give unto the LORD the glory *due unto* his name: bring an offering, and come into his courts. 9 O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth."

(Psalms 100:1-5) "Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. 2 Serve the LORD with gladness:

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come before his presence with singing. ³ Know ye that the LORD he *is* God: *it is* he *that* hath made us, and not we ourselves; *we are* his people, and the sheep of his pasture. ⁴ Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, *and* into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, *and* bless his name. ⁵ For the LORD *is* good; his mercy *is* everlasting; and his truth *endureth* to all generations.”

(Psalms 65:4) “Blessed *is the man whom* thou choosest, and causest to approach *unto thee, that* he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, *even of thy holy temple.*”

Throughout the Scriptures faith is portrayed as a matter of coming to Christ. To believe on the Son of God is to come to him. To come to him is to believe on him. We come to him by following after him, as disciples follow after their Master. Our all glorious Christ says, “*Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself*” (v. 34). — To worship God is to come to Christ.

Coming to Christ is the result of a deliberate, purposeful choice. It is an act of the will. Our Master says, “*whosoever will*”. Let us never alter his Word. I know that faith is a gift of God. I know that none will ever come to Christ, no one will ever worship God, unless God the Holy

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Spirit graciously, effectually causes them to come and worship. Yet, it is certain that any who come to him, come to him because they want him and choose him. God does not save sinners by knocking them in the head and dragging them to Christ. He saves sinners by causing them to want Christ more than life itself.

Faith in Christ is not a matter of conscription, but a voluntary act. The soldiers in Christ's army are not drafted, forced soldiers, but volunteers. It is written, — "*Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power*" (Psalm 65:40). — "*Blessed is the man whom thou choolest and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts*" (Psalm 65:4).

Coming to Christ is an act of the heart, a spiritual, not a carnal thing. No one has ever come to Christ by walking a church aisle, kneeling at an altar, saying a prayer someone taught him to repeat, or signing a decision card. If you would come to Christ, you must do so without moving a muscle. You must come to him in your heart. Faith is a heart work (Romans 10:8-10).

(Romans 10:8-13) "But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 9 That if thou

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shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. 12 ¶ For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

True faith is the willful, deliberate, voluntary confidence of my heart in the power and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is trusting the merits of his blood and righteousness as my only acceptance before God. Faith in Christ involves the willing surrender of my heart to him as my Lord. It is the bowing and submission of my heart to him as my Lord (Luke 14:25-33).

Coming to Christ is a continual thing. Our Savior does not speak of coming to him as a one time thing, as a single act, but as a constant, continual, lifelong thing. If I worship God, I do not worship him one day in seven. I worship him with my life! If I do not worship the Lord Jesus with my life, I do not worship at all! — **Faith in Christ is not an event in life, but a way of life.** — *“If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living*

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stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious” (1 Peter 2:3-4).

(1 Peter 2:1-7) “Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, ² As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: ³ If so be ye have tasted that the Lord *is* gracious. ⁴ ¶ To whom coming, *as unto* a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, *and* precious, ⁵ Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. ⁶ Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. ⁷ Unto you therefore which believe *he is* precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner.”

Not only are sinners bidden to come to Christ, we are commanded to come (1 John 3:23). The warrant of faith is not my feeling, my emotion, my meeting certain prescribed conditions, but God’s Word. If the Son of God says for me to come to him, then I may come to him!

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Any sinner in all the world who will come to Christ may come to Christ. **Our Master uses that blessed word of universal application and uses it frequently** — “**Whosoever**”. I am so thankful he said, “*Whosoever will,*” rather than, “if Don Fortner will.” Had he said that, I would have concluded he must have meant some other Don Fortner. But I cannot doubt that “*whosoever*” includes me!

(Matthew 11:28-30) “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.”

(John 3:36) “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”

(Revelation 22:17) “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

Salvation is coming to Christ, worshipping God in Spirit and in truth. It is to dwell in the courts of our God. — “**A**

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day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.” (Psalms 84:10) — “Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God.” (Psalm 92:13).

But how can I enter into the courts of the Lord? What is required? By what means can a poor, vile sinner enter into and dwell in the courts of the Lord? Turn with me to Exodus 38, and I will show you. The Tabernacle in the Wilderness was made up of three sections, three courts:...

- The Outer Court — Representing the Church and People God on Earth.
- The Inner Court, the Holy Place — Representing Heaven Itself, the Place of Divine Worship.
- The Holy of Holies — Representing the Very Throne of God.

The only Gate by which we can enter these courts of our God, the only Door of access to God is the Lord Jesus Christ, our Mediator, who is represented by all the curtains hanging between the courts. Here, in Exodus 38, we see in vivid type and picture how it is that sinners like you and me may enter into and dwell in the courts of our God. — Here are five things essential to the worship of God, five things that are always involved in and essential to the everlasting salvation of God's elect.

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1. ATONEMENT

The very first thing required, if we would come to God, if we would enter into his courts, if we would be saved, is atonement, blood atonement. We must come to God by an Altar of Sacrifice he has made, with the sacrifice he has given (Exodus 38:1-7).

“And he made **the altar of burnt offering** of shittim wood: five cubits *was* the length thereof, and five cubits the breadth thereof; *it was* **foursquare**; and three cubits the height thereof. ² And he made **the horns thereof on the four corners of it**; the horns thereof were of the same: and he overlaid it with brass. ³ And he made all the vessels of the altar, the pots, and the shovels, and the basons, *and* the fleshhooks, and the firepans: all the vessels thereof made he *of* brass. ⁴ And he made for the altar a brasen grate of network under the compass thereof beneath unto the midst of it. ⁵ And he cast four rings for the four ends of the grate of brass, *to be* places for the staves. ⁶ And he made the staves *of* shittim wood, and overlaid them with brass. ⁷ And he put the staves into the rings on the sides of the altar, to bear it withal; he made the altar hollow with boards.” (Exodus 38:1-7)

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Christ is our Altar. Clearly this altar is a picture of our Lord Jesus (Hebrews 13:7-13; Psalm 118:1, 14-29).

(Hebrews 13:7-13) “Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of *their* conversation. ⁸ Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever. ⁹ Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For *it is* a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein. ¹⁰ We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. ¹¹ For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. ¹² Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate. ¹³ Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.”

But we must never separate the Altar from the Sacrifice. Christ is both our Altar and our Sacrifice.

(Psalms 118:1) “O give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: because his mercy *endureth* for ever.”

(Psalms 118:14-29) “The LORD *is* my strength and song, and is become my salvation. ¹⁵ The voice of

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rejoicing and salvation *is* in the tabernacles of the righteous: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly. ¹⁶ The right hand of the LORD is exalted: the right hand of the LORD doeth valiantly. ¹⁷ I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD. ¹⁸ The LORD hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death. ¹⁹ ¶ **Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the LORD:** ²⁰ **This gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter.** ²¹ I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation. ²² The stone *which* the builders refused is become the head *stone* of the corner. ²³ **This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.** ²⁴ This *is* the day *which* the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. ²⁵ Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity. ²⁶ Blessed *be* he that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD. ²⁷ **God is the LORD, which hath shewed us light: bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.** ²⁸ Thou *art* my God, and I will praise thee: *thou art* my God, I will exalt thee. ²⁹ O give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.”

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The horns of the altar upon which the sacrifice must be bound...

- Speak of the strength and efficacy of the sacrifice.
- There were four of them, pointing to the four corners of the earth from which the ransomed of the Lord must be fetched.
- The sacrifice was bound to the altar by the hand of God as a matter of justice and grace, as a matter of mercy and truth (Galatians 3:13; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21).

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree:” (Galatians 3:13)

“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.” (1 Peter 2:24)

“For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:” (1 Peter 3:18)

“Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things

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are become new. ¹⁸ And all things *are* of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹ To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. ²⁰ Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. ²¹ For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” (2 Corinthians 5:17-21)

Question: If I were to ask you were the first use of the word “sin” is in the Bible, what would you say? What is the context in which we find the word sin, for the first time? What is the first thing that is specifically called sin in the Book of God? — If you will turn once more to Genesis 4, you will see that the first thing named sin in this Book is the attempt of proud man to do away with God's sacrifice (Genesis 4:7). **Everything about this matter of salvation begins with and hinges upon God's Sacrifice for sin. Yet, that which men most despise and most viciously trample under their feet is the precious blood of Christ!**

(Genesis 4:1-7) “And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a

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man from the LORD. ² And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. ³¶ And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. ⁴ And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: ⁵ But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. ⁶¶ And the LORD said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? ⁷ **If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door.** And unto thee *shall be* his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.”

2. CLEANSING

The first thing is atonement. We cannot come to God, we cannot be accepted of God, we cannot worship God, we cannot enter the courts of his house without blood atonement by the sacrifice of God's darling Son. The second thing required is the cleansing portrayed in the laver of brass (Exodus 38:8).

“And he made the laver *of* brass, and the foot of it *of* brass, of the lookingglasses of *the women* assembling,

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which assembled *at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.” (Exodus 38:8)

This laver of brass and the ceremonial cleansing performed at the laver typified the Gospel of Christ as it is applied to the hearts of chosen sinners by God the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:3-7), purging our consciences from the dead works of dead men in dead religion to serve the living God.

“For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, *and* hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, ⁵ Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; ⁶ Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; ⁷ That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.” (Titus 3:3-7)

The laver was made from the brass “*lookingglasses of the women assembling.*” Why is that stated? I know the word “lookingglass” refers to a mirror. And I know that James compares the gospel to a mirror in which we behold ourselves (James 1:23). Yet, in that same context James

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speaks of the gospel, not only as a mirror in which to behold ourselves, but also as a “*lookingglass*” through which to “*behold the perfect law of liberty*” (James 1:25).

Perhaps, the Holy Spirit used this word “*lookingglass*” because the gospel is the “*lookingglass*” in which and by which we behold our Lord Jesus, looking unto him unto life everlasting (Isaiah 45:22; Zechariah 12:10; John 1:29; Hebrews 11:3; 1 John 3:3).

3. COMMUNION

When the sinner comes to God trusting Christ, when we come to God through faith in his blood, beholding Christ in the gospel, we enter into his courts and dwell with him in sweet communion. — We walk with God in sweet fellowship and intimate communion. That is the picture set before us in the courts of the Lord’s house (Exodus 38:9-18).

“And **he made the court**: on the south side southward **the hangings** of the court *were of* fine twined linen, an hundred cubits: ¹⁰ **Their pillars** *were* twenty, and their brasen **sockets** twenty; the **hooks** of the pillars and their **fillets** *were of* silver. ¹¹ And for the north side *the hangings were* an hundred cubits, their pillars *were* twenty, and their sockets of brass twenty; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets *of* silver. ¹² And for the west

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side *were* hangings of fifty cubits, their pillars ten, and their sockets ten; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets *of* silver. ¹³ And for the east side eastward fifty cubits. ¹⁴ The hangings of the one side *of the gate were* fifteen cubits; their pillars three, and their sockets three. ¹⁵ And for the other side of the court gate, on this hand and that hand, *were* hangings of fifteen cubits; their pillars three, and their sockets three. ¹⁶ All the hangings of the court round about *were* of fine twined linen. ¹⁷ And the sockets for the pillars *were of* brass; the hooks of the pillars and their fillets *of* silver; and the overlaying of their chapiters *of* silver; and all the pillars of the court *were* filleted with silver. ¹⁸ And **the hanging for the gate of the court** *was* needlework, *of* blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen: and twenty cubits *was* the length, and the height in the breadth *was* five cubits, **answerable to the hangings of the court.**” (Exodus 38:9-18)

- Everything in Perfect Symmetry
- Everything Reflecting Christ
- Everything in Harmony

4. SECURITY

The fourth thing that is absolutely essential to this matter of worship, that without which we cannot worship, is security,

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the absolute security of our souls in Christ and with Christ. That security is pictured in the pillars and pins, the posts and nails that held everything together, securing all the pieces of the Tabernacle (Exodus 38:19-20).

“And their pillars *were* four, and their sockets *of* brass four; their hooks *of* silver, and the overlaying of their chapiters and their fillets *of* silver. ²⁰ And all the pins of the tabernacle, and of the court round about, *were of* brass.” (Exodus 38:19-20)

The word “*pin*” is the same word that is translated “*nail*” in the Book of Judges (4:21, 22; 5:26). You will remember that Heber’s wife, Jael, drove a tent pin, an iron nail, through Sisera’s temples, firmly attaching his head to the ground. In Isaiah 33:20 and 54:2, the same word is translated “*stake*.” I point this out simply so that you will not think of these tabernacle pins as small things. They were large, brass stakes, driven deep into the ground.

They were used to securely attach and fasten the tabernacle and its court to the earth. So securely was it fastened that we never read that it was even slightly disturbed by all the strong winds it must have endured during all the years of Israel’s sojourn through the wilderness. Many of the things inside the tabernacle (the showbread, the candlestick, the

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censer) might have been easily swept away with high winds or a flood of waters. But that never happened.

These brass nails were typical of our Lord Jesus Christ. The nails were made of brass, a material that could not be corrupted though the nails were driven deep into the ground. They withstood all the elements of the earth. Clearly, they typified our blessed Savior, who is described by Isaiah as One fastened as a Nail in a sure place (Isaiah 22:20-24). He is the security of our souls.

5. SACRIFICE

Yet, there is another thing that is always involved in the worship of our God and Savior — Sacrifice. I mean personal sacrifice. We cannot come to God without Christ our Sacrifice, trusting his blood and righteousness. And we cannot come to God, we cannot and do not trust Christ, without the surrender and sacrifice of ourselves to him in the totality of our being (Exodus 38:21-31).

“This is the sum of the tabernacle, *even* of the tabernacle of testimony, as it was counted, according to the commandment of Moses, for the service of the Levites, by the hand of Ithamar, son to Aaron the priest. ²² And Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made all that the

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LORD commanded Moses. ²³ And with him *was* Aholiab, son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, an engraver, and a cunning workman, and an embroiderer in blue, and in purple, and in scarlet, and fine linen. ²⁴ All the gold that was occupied for the work in all the work of the holy *place*, even the gold of the offering, was twenty and nine talents, and seven hundred and thirty shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary. ²⁵ And the silver of them that were numbered of the congregation *was* an hundred talents, and a thousand seven hundred and threescore and fifteen shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary: ²⁶ 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*. ²⁷ And of the hundred talents of silver were cast the sockets of the sanctuary, and the sockets of the vail; an hundred sockets of the hundred talents, a talent for a socket. ²⁸ And of the thousand seven hundred seventy and five shekels he made hooks for the pillars, and overlaid their chapiters, and filleted them. ²⁹ And the brass of the offering *was* seventy talents, and two thousand and four hundred shekels. ³⁰ And therewith he made the sockets to the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and the brasen altar, and the brasen grate for it, and all the vessels of the altar, ³¹ And the

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sockets of the court round about, and the sockets of the court gate, and all the pins of the tabernacle, and all the pins of the court round about.” (Exodus 38:21-31)

I do not know for certain, because I have no way of knowing the precise value of the items listed here, but I am told that the sum of the cost, the total cost of the Tabernacle exceeded ten million dollars.

If you go back to chapter 35 and read about the gifts the children of Israel brought to the Lord with willing hearts, you will see that there was not a niggardly person among them. They all seemed to speak as David did many years later, when he sought a place to build the house of God, — **“I will not offer to God that which doth cost me nothing!”**

O Holy Spirit, so let us worship our God in the beauty of holiness, in the beauty of my Savior’s holiness, which you alone can convey to mortals upon the earth.

Read these last verses again, and you will see that everything connected with worship of God is built upon, arises from, is held together and kept secure for the glory of God by atonement — The atonement money paid in the numbering of Israel (Exodus 30:11-16).

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“And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 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. ¹³ 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. ¹⁴ Every one that passeth among them that are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering unto the LORD. 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**. ¹⁶ And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt **appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation**; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls.”
(Exodus 30:11-16)

This numbering of the children of Israel and the atonement money they paid, so that no plague come upon them, was typical of our ransom by Christ.

- None but Israelites were ransomed.
- A specific, numbered people were ransomed.

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- The ransom price was the same for all.
- Those who were ransomed were preserved from any plague (Proverbs 12:21; Psalm 91:10).

(Proverbs 12:21) “There shall no evil happen to the just: but the wicked shall be filled with mischief.”

(Psalms 91:10) “There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.”

Illustration: *A. J. Gordon and The Black Birds*

Amen.