

Gospel Pictures: Ransomed, Washed, Anointed (Exodus 30:11-38)

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Please open to the book of Exodus and I want to open with a story from the book *Peace Child*

- In 1962 the Richardsons and their 17-month-old went to the unreached in New Guinea
- Don and Carol risked their life and their little one for a Sawi tribe of Irian Jaya, Indonesia
- For years they befriended them and learned their language to try to tell the gospel story
- But the tribe misunderstood Judas as the hero of the story because Sawis valued treachery
- The tribe celebrated betrayal as cannibals and headhunters with human skulls as trophies
- Don wondered if he could ever reach them and decided to leave as a tribal war broke out
- Then he witnessed a strange picture: the Sawi chief stopped the killing by a 'peace child'

This was an ancient practice of their stone-age world and very different than our modern world

- Instead of many dying the chief gave his only son to the enemy, like a 'ransom for many'
- The peace child lived among people not his own and as long as he lived there was peace
- To betray or kill a peace child was the most shameful and unthinkable act to the Sawi
- Don Richardson finally saw what he called a 'redemptive analogy,' or a 'gospel picture'
- He shared how God gave His only Son to His enemies as a peace child to ransom many
- The Prince of Peace beat treachery and the tomb by rising again and Jesus always lives
- A strange Sawi foreign custom became an analogy of redemption, a picture of the gospel
- It opened the eyes of that faraway culture and transformed them as they trusted in Christ

Jesus is the Peace Child of God for every tribe and tongue

In Ex 30 today we'll see 3 redemptive analogies in ancient practices of a very different world

- Ex 30 has strange cultural customs of a faraway land that are foreign to our modern life
 - o Censuses that bring plagues, ceremonial washings, and special holy anointing oil?
- But if we see these as gospel pictures this can open our eyes and transform our lives too

It's about peace with God by a ransom, and being washed and anointed

30:11 *The LORD said to Moses,* ¹² "When you take the census of the people of Israel, then each shall give a ransom for his life to the LORD when you number them, that there be no plague among them when you number them." ¹³ Each one who is numbered in the census shall give this: half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary (the shekel is twenty gerahs), half a shekel as an offering to the LORD. ¹⁴ Everyone who is numbered in the census, from twenty years old and upward, shall give the LORD's offering. ¹⁵ The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less, than the half shekel, when you give the LORD's offering to make atonement for your lives. ¹⁶ You shall take the atonement money from the people of Israel and shall give it for the service of the tent of meeting, that it may bring the people of Israel to remembrance before the LORD, so as to make atonement for your lives." ¹⁷ The LORD said to Moses, ¹⁸ "You shall also make a basin of bronze, with its stand of bronze, for washing. You shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it, ¹⁹ with which Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet. ²⁰ When they go into the tent of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn a food offering to the LORD, they shall wash with water, so that they may not die. ²¹ They shall wash their hands and their feet, so that they may not die. It shall be a statute forever to them, even to him and to his offspring throughout their generations." **[drop to v. 30]** You shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may serve me as priests. . ³¹ And you shall say to the people of Israel, 'This shall be my holy anointing oil throughout your generations. ³² It shall not be poured on the body of an ordinary person, and you shall make no other like it in composition. It is holy, and it shall be holy to you. ³³ Whoever compounds any like it or whoever puts any of it on an outsider shall be cut off from his people.'

3 gospel pictures: 1. Ransomed by a price paid

2. Washed by water for life

3. Anointed by oil to be holy (money, water, oil don't save – it's a picture)

The first ransom by a price paid in the context was ch 21, so let's start turning back to ch 21.

Look at 21:29: *But if the ox has been accustomed to gore in the past, and its owner has been warned but has not kept it in, and it kills a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned, and its owner also shall be put to death.*³⁰ **If a ransom is imposed on him, then he shall give for the redemption of his life whatever is imposed on him.**

1st time the word *ransom* is used in the Bible, not a common word

The negligent owner of an animal killing people could avoid death if a ransom redeemed his life

- He deserved to die, but could live if a ransom was imposed (I think by a judge) and paid
- Whatever justice imposed he must give for redemption of his life, it had to be paid in full
- It's like the law holds him hostage, and he'll be executed, unless he pays the ransom price
- 2nd time this word *ransom* occurs is ch 30, this time not for some criminals, but all Israel
- Look back at ch 30 and think back in the story how God spared Israel in Egypt's plagues

30:12 *When you take the census of the people of Israel, then each shall give a ransom for his life to the LORD when you number them, that there be no plague among them when you number them.*

- Months earlier, God sent deadly plagues on Egyptians, including death to firstborn sons
- Now there's a warning of a deadly plague on Israelites taking a census without a ransom
- Jews couldn't think 'I'm ok, I'm not Egyptian, and I've never killed anybody (or my ox)'
- Israelites being numbered had to remember their days were numbered and life was God's
- In 2 Sam 24, David sinfully took a census violating this, and a plague killed 70,000 men
- There's pride then and now in numbers and in thinking bigger means better as believers
- A census isn't sinful, but self-reliance is, or making spirituality a matter of size or status
- A big army or big church doesn't impress God who doesn't owe us but we owe Him life

He doesn't need our money but giving reminds us we need Him

¹³ *Each one who is numbered in the census shall give this: half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary (the shekel is twenty gerahs), half a shekel as an offering to the LORD.* ¹⁴ *Everyone who is numbered in the census, from twenty years old and upward, shall give the LORD's offering.* ¹⁵ *The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less, than the half shekel, when you give the LORD's offering to make atonement...*

- This was for life and death, v. 16 calls it 'atonement money,' v. 16 ends 'for your lives'
- As Israel was counted, rich or poor counted equally to God and all had an accounting due
- A half-shekel was doable for the poor but sizable (ex: Joseph sold a slave for 20 shekels)¹
- The rich weren't allowed to give more to show off or buy off God's favor, it isn't for sale
- No life is worth more or less to God, there's equal value and worth for all in His image

This ransom price for their census is a picture of a much bigger price due for their sin

Spurgeon said each one bringing a ransom price is 'confessing that he deserved to die, owning that he was in debt to God, and bringing the sum demanded as a type of a great redemption'² [gospel picture]

- There's a greater ransom this pictures, Hosea 13:14: *I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. Where, O death, are your plagues? Where, O grave, is your destruction?*³

1 Pet 1:18 'you were ransomed...not with perishable...silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ...'

- A half-shekel of silver covered a census ransom, but only Jesus can cover a soul's ransom
- Jews could do a census free of plague, only Jesus can ransom from the power of the grave
- Nothing perishable pays for what's eternal, only the precious blood of Christ is sufficient

Two wonders here that I confess, My worth and my unworthiness, My value fixed, my ransom paid at the cross⁴

- The price paid in Ex 30 was a little reminder of the Redeemer and greater price He'd pay

Rev 5:10: *by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation...*

We should respond with heaven: 'worthy is the Lamb slain to receive riches...!'

That's the 1st gospel picture: ransomed by a price paid, now a 2nd: washed by water for life

¹⁸ You shall also make a basin of bronze, with its stand of bronze, for washing. You shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it, ¹⁹ with which Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet.

Some writers call water ‘one of the most important symbols of spiritual things...one of the most far-reaching and many-sided figures of Scripture’⁵ (literally Gen 1 to Rev 22)

- Life depends on water. And this basin had a ‘strategic placement and symbolic meaning’⁶
- Visualize the courtyard: priests went from a bronze altar and handling blood into the tent
- On practical levels, after butchering animals you need clean hands to eat bread in the tent
- But this isn’t just about sanitation, on a spiritual level it symbolizes pure⁷ service, Ps 26:6
- Their feet were to be washed, too, not to bring uncleanness to God’s presence (like 3:5?)

²⁰ When they go into the tent of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn a food offering to the LORD, they shall wash with water, so that they may not die. [so this is about a holy God, not just hygiene]

The point isn’t ‘cleanliness is next to godliness,’ it’s being next to God can kill the unclean!

Earlier the water of the flood killed a world of sinners, and God turned Egypt’s waters to blood

- Pharaoh’s army died in the water of the Red Sea, but through it on foot God saved Israel
- And when Israel thought they’d die in the desert, God provided water to show His grace

²¹ They shall wash their hands and their feet, so that they may not die. It shall be a statute forever to them...

- God says it twice for emphasis, and says it’s forever, it’s an abiding principle for all time
- It wasn’t just for priests, ch 19 commanded all believers to wash before approaching Him
- David says in Ps 24:3-4 ‘who shall stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart...’
- He knew it was spiritual in Ps 51:2: Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin!

The NT says in James 4:8 ‘Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.’

- That context is spiritually drawing near to God, humbly repenting in both hands and heart
- Even in the OT this became a gospel picture, a fountain of grace to save, cleanse, purify

This small basin for a few Israelites in Aaron’s family pictured something bigger for all Israel

- Zech 13:1: ‘there shall be **a fountain** opened for...Jerusalem, to **cleanse** them from sin and uncleanness’
- Ch 14 says after that the Lord will come with all His holy ones, His feet will stand on the Mt. of Olives
 - o The earth will be changed, heavenly lights will go out and He will be King over all the earth
 - o All NT language of 2nd coming, 14:8: ‘On that day **living waters** shall flow out of Jerusalem...’

Sometime before that, God says in Zech 12:10 to ‘inhabitants of Jerusalem...I will **pour out...a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so...they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn...**’ [i.e., repent]

- I agree with R.C. Sproul and many of the Reformed writers that’s grace to future Israel
- OT Jews poured out water on their hands and feet but God will pour out what it pictured
- NT Jews pierced His hands and feet but one day Jews will look on Him in repentant faith

Rom 11:26, all Israel will be saved, a fulness of Gentiles pleading for mercy as grace outpours

If you trust Christ alone, ‘there is a Fountain...where sinners...lose all their guilty stains’

‘Have you been to Jesus for the cleansing power, trusting Him this hour? Are you washed?’

That’s a gospel picture in the NT and OT, Isa 55: ‘Come to the waters...Seek the LORD...call upon him’

o Isa 4:4 ‘The Lord will wash away the filth...he will cleanse the bloodstains...’ (NIV84)

o Jer 4:14 ‘wash your heart from evil, that you may be saved...’ But man can’t do that on his own!

God says He’ll do it in the next prophet, Ezekiel 36:25: “I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean. Your filth will be washed away...²⁶ And I will give you a new heart...a tender, responsive heart” (NLT)

- Taking out the old heart, a spiritual heart transplant is another gospel picture we’ve seen
- The surgeon puts in a new heart that responds with new life, it’s like being ‘born again’!
- The Great Physician cleanses to prevent infection, it’s all His doing as a picture of grace

Titus 3:5 says God saved us by ‘his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit’

Jn 3:5 says being born again is ‘of water and the Spirit’ then Jesus explained ‘the wind blows where it wishes’

Those are gospel pictures of sovereign grace, not what you do, what water or wind does to you

- Regeneration isn't caused by us, the Spirit blows or breathes new life where God wishes
 - A baby doesn't birth itself or heart-transplant itself, but responds in life and genuine love after
 - God giving new birth or a new heart doesn't make us robots, it makes us respond in faith
- Eph 2, but God when we were dead made us alive by grace through faith that's a gift**

God alone creates life and cleanses from sin in regeneration, but there's also ongoing washing

- Pastor Mark read earlier from Jn 13 where Jesus said His disciples were already clean
- Jesus said the already spiritually bathed by grace still need footbaths for filth (like camp?)
- Jesus took a basin, put water in it, and He washed off their dirty feet (all Ex 30 language)
- That's the gospel picture of washing by water for life, as we still walk in this sinful world
- How do we let Jesus cleanse us? 1 Jn 1:9, confess your sins and He'll forgive and cleanse

Communion today for the repentant is a means of grace, sanctifying purifying grace

The 3rd final gospel picture of salvation and sanctification in Ex 30: Anointed by oil to be holy

²⁵ *And you shall make of these a sacred anointing oil blended as by the perfumer; it shall be a holy anointing oil*

...

Remember physical oil or water or money can't save, they're pictures of what the Savior does

- Israel used all those symbolically as a visual aid for what God alone can do spiritually
- Special oil has no magical properties, but this special anointing set apart as special, holy

²⁹ *You shall consecrate them [dedicate, devote to God], that they may be most holy. Whatever touches them will become holy.* ³⁰ *You shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may serve me as priests.*

- Only a priest could take it or make it, this isn't an essential oil for your body, v. 32 says
- v. 33 warns if you make this for yourself or misuse it, you'll be cut off from God's people

Only holy things and a holy priest were anointed to picture a Holy Spirit-Anointed One to come

- The Heb word anointed came to mean *Messiah*, Anointed by the Spirit, Isa 61:1, Lk 4:18
- Jesus our Great High Priest does what oil only pictured, He actually makes believers holy
- External ceremonial consecration in the law becomes internal sanctification in the gospel
- And even some of the ingredients in v. 23-24 in the NT and OT would be applied to Jesus

Ps 45:7 *'God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions; your robes are all fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia'* [Ex 30 oil has fragrant myrrh and cassia, Heb 1 applies that psalm to Christ]

- In Ex 30:23, the sweet-smelling cinammon with myrrh marks love in Song of Songs 4:14
- Notice in v. 23 it's a lot of the finest of *liquid* myrrh, or literally a '*free-flowing* myrrh'⁸
- Same Heb word Moses uses for the Year of Jubilee, freedom to slaves, forgiven debts⁹
- Same word in Isa 61:1 where the Spirit anoints Messiah to proclaim liberty to captives

- o So in Ex 30 the priest with oil running down was dripping with symbolism of Jesus

There's gold in v. 3 and frankincense in v. 34

- Sound familiar? Wise men came with gold, frankincense, and myrrh (all 3 are in Ex 30)
- That was His birth, at His death Jews anointed His body with myrrh and spices like this¹⁰
- Days earlier Jesus honored a woman who anointed Him with a costly blended fragrance¹¹
- 3 years earlier was the ultimate Anointing of the Spirit on His head at His water baptism

All the pictures of Ex 30 come together in Him: He didn't need water to wash, we need Him

- The gospel of Luke says it was a census that caused the birth of Jesus to be in Bethlehem
- He's the same Lord who names and numbers the stars and numbers the hairs on our head
- Why was He born the Son of Man? He said He came to give His life a ransom for many

To sing 'my chains are gone, I've been set free, God my Savior ransomed me!'

- Jewish priests could wash blood of sacrifices off their hands but it pictured a greater need

‘What can wash away my sin...make me whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus’

- God says in 1 Jn 1:7 *‘the blood of Jesus his son cleanses us from all sin’* (NIV ‘purifies’)
- 1 Jn 2:20 says to all believers in Jesus: *‘you have been anointed by the Holy One...’*²⁷ *But the anointing that you received from him abides in you...’* Better than OT oil on the outside, the Holy Spirit’s anointing abides inside
- Not an extra holy few, every believer, 2 Cor 1:21 says God *‘establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us,’*²² *and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.’*
- Sometimes we talk like ‘so-and-so is really anointed’ but the NT talks of all Christians as really anointed
- Anointing, ransom, and washing of regeneration are one-time, Spirit-filling and sanctification is ongoing
- 2 Cor 7:1 ***Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God*** [that completes the Ex 30 pictures]
- 1 Cor 6:19: *do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own,*²⁰ ***for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.***

The body matters, all of you was bought with the ransom price to glorify God

2 Tim 2:21 *Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work.*²² *So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.*

I’ve asked before what do you need to run from? Who do you need to run with?

WE NEED CONTINUAL CLEANSING OF WATER OF THE WORD, JN 17:17, EPH 5:26, PS 119:9, ETC.

NOTE HOW 1 PETER 1:15-19 CONNECTS BE HOLY WITH OUR RANSOM

As we come to communion listen to the words of a Puritan summing up the gospel pictures in Ex 30: ‘Come, my soul, look at the Jewish ordinances, and with an eye of faith behold thy Redeemer shadowed out in every one. He is...the ransom money, the true...fountain for sin and for uncleanness; the sweet spices, the holy oil in the graces of his Holy Spirit; and the sum and substance of all divine ordinances. Dearest and ever-blessed Jesus!...washed in his blood, and accepted in his righteousness, I may at all times come boldly to a throne of grace, and find grace to help in every time of need.’¹²

¹ ‘Joseph was sold into slavery for twenty shekels...Jeremiah bought a field for seventeen shekels...purchases that many peasants in fact could never afford...a half-shekel would be much more than small change... Practically speaking, this law would have the result of making a census extraordinarily unpopular, and that is probably the intended effect; that is, the tax is meant to discourage rulers from taking a census’ - Duane A. Garrett, *A Commentary on Exodus*, Kregel Exegetical Library (Kregel Academic, 2014), 610.

² C. H. Spurgeon, “Silver Sockets: Or, Redemption the Foundation,” in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 27 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1881), 61–62.

³ NIV84.

⁴ Getty Music, “I Will Boast In My Redeemer.”

⁵ Arthur W. Pink, *Gleanings in Exodus*, 294.

⁶ David Levy, *The Tabernacle: Shadows of the Messiah*, 34.

⁷ Psalm 26:6 connects going around the altar with washing hands to signify innocence spiritually.

⁸ Victor Hamilton, *Exodus*, 515.

⁹ Leviticus 25:10.

¹⁰ John 19:39-40.

¹¹ John 12:1-7, Mark 14:3-9.

¹² Robert Hawker, *Poor Man’s Old Testament Commentary: Genesis–Numbers*, vol. 1, p. 372.