

QUESTION: What is the meaning of Exodus 20:25, and does it have any application to us today?

ANSWER:

- **Exodus 20:25** "And if you make an altar of stone for Me, you shall not build it of cut stones, for if you wield your tool on it, **you will profane it.**"

This was a commandment to guard against IDOLATRY and PRIDE, and to be a picture of GRACE v. WORKS. The altar was to be made of **plain stones**, because God knows man's sinful nature. If men were allowed to decorate the altar with fancy tool work, the focus would soon be on how beautiful the altar was, and the talent of the artists, and not on **God and the awfulness of sin**. It is also a picture of SALVATION BY GRACE, because God does not want ANYTHING to be added to the work of Christ on the cross. **Salvation is by faith in Jesus Christ ALONE, plus NOTHING**. Sinful man cannot ADD any little artistic embellishments, so to speak, to what God has done for us. We cannot ADD good works, keeping commandments or ordinances, religious rituals, noble deeds, or anything else of the flesh. God allows NOTHING to be added as a requirement, and if we DO add our own efforts, God says it is PROFANE (impure, defiled, violated). See Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; II Tim. 1:9; Romans 4:1-8