

Exodus 38:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he cast four rings for the four ends of the grate of brass, to be places for the staves.

Analysis

Four rings of bronze at the four ends of the grate for carrying-staves teach that even the altar of judgment accompanies God's people through their journeys. The gospel includes both God's love and His wrath, both mercy and judgment. A portable judgment-altar demonstrates that awareness of sin's seriousness travels with believers—we never journey beyond need for cross-centered living. The four rings (universality) at four ends (completeness) suggest that judgment and atonement reach every corner of human experience.

Historical Context

The rings attached to the grating allowed staves to be inserted for carrying. The bronze altar, though heavy and bulky, needed portability for wilderness travels. Kohathite Levites bore responsibility for transporting it (Numbers 4:13-14), using these rings and poles.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. What does the portable judgment-altar teach about believers needing continual awareness of sin's seriousness and Christ's atonement?
2. How do four rings at four ends illustrate the comprehensive reach of both judgment and atonement?

Interlinear Text

לְמַכְבֵּר	בְּקָצָן	תִּזְבְּעַת	בְּאַרְבָּעָה	טְבֻעַת	לְמַכְבֵּר
And he cast	for the four	rings	for the four	ends	of the grate
H3332	H702	H2885	H702	H7099	H4345
הַמְּכָבֵר	בְּקָצָן	טְבֻעַת	בְּאַרְבָּעָה	לְמַכְבֵּר	בְּאַרְבָּעָה
of brass	to be places	for the staves			
H5178	H1004	H905			
לְבָדִים:	בְּתִים	הַנְּחָשָׁת			

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 27:4 (Parallel theme): And thou shalt make for it a grate of network of brass; and upon the net shalt thou make four brasen rings in the four corners thereof.

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