

Ezekiel 40:39

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And in the porch of the gate were two tables on this side, and two tables on that side, to slay thereon the burnt offering and the sin offering and the trespass offering.

Analysis

The eight tables (four pairs) for slaying offerings demonstrate systematic provision for multiple sacrifices. Three offering types appear: burnt offering (total consecration), sin offering (atonement for unintentional sin), and trespass offering (restitution for specific wrongs). This triad addresses humanity's comprehensive need: positional sanctification (burnt), cleansing from pollution (sin), and restitution for damages (trespass). The Hebrew verb שָׁחַט (shachat, 'slay') emphasizes violent death—sin's cost is blood. The tables' location 'in the porch of the gate' meant sacrificial death occurred at the threshold between outer court and inner sanctum—graphic reminder that approach to God's presence requires death. Reformed theology emphasizes penal substitution: Christ died the death we deserved (2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Peter 2:24). These tables typify Calvary where the Lamb of God was slain for our sins.

Historical Context

Levitical law distinguished between burnt offerings (Leviticus 1), sin offerings (Leviticus 4), and trespass/guilt offerings (Leviticus 5-6). Each addressed different aspects of covenant relationship. Burnt offerings expressed worship and complete devotion. Sin offerings atoned for ritual impurity and unintentional violations. Trespass offerings required restitution plus 20% for offenses against God or neighbor (Leviticus 5:14-6:7). The sacrificial system taught that sin affects multiple dimensions: vertical relationship with God and horizontal relationships with

others. The tables' stone construction (verse 42) provided permanent, sturdy surfaces for butchering animals—messy, necessary work. For the exiles, this vision promised not merely symbolic restoration but actual, physical resumption of sacrificial worship foreshadowing Christ's ultimate sacrifice.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. Which aspect of Christ's sacrifice speaks most powerfully to your current need—total devotion, cleansing, or restitution?
2. How do these multiple offering types reveal the comprehensive nature of sin's effects and Christ's complete redemption?
3. What 'tables' in your life—habits, relationships, priorities—need to become places where sin is 'slain'?

Interlinear Text

וּבֵּאֵלָם	הַשַּׁעַר	וּשְׁנֵי יָם	שְׁלֹחַן זֶה	מִפֵּי	וּשְׁנֵי יָם
And in the porch	of the gate	were two	on this side and two tables		were two
H197	H8179	H8147	H7979	H6311	H8147
שְׁלֹחַן זֶה	מִפֵּי הַ	לִשְׁחֹט	אֲלֵיהֶם		
on this side and two tables		on that side to slay			
H7979	H6311	H7819	H413		
הָעוֹלָה	וְהַחֲטָאת	וְהַזָּכָת			
thereon the burnt offering	and the sin offering	and the trespass offering			
H5930	H2403	H817			

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 46:2 (Sacrifice): And the prince shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate without, and shall stand by the post of the gate, and the priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate: then he shall go forth; but the gate shall not be shut until the evening.

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