

Ezekiel 40:42

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the four tables were of hewn stone for the burnt offering, of a cubit and an half long, and a cubit and an half broad, and one cubit high: whereupon also they laid the instruments wherewith they slew the burnt offering and the sacrifice.

Analysis

And the four tables were of hewn stone for the burnt offering, of a cubit and an half long, and a cubit and an half broad, and one cubit high: whereupon also they laid the instruments wherewith they slew the burnt offering and the sacrifice. These four tables differed from the previous eight—made of gazit (גִּזִּית, "hewn stone"), they were permanent fixtures, not wooden furniture. The precise measurements (approximately 2.5 feet square by 1.5 feet high) show God's exacting standards. Stone tables would be durable, easily cleaned of blood, and ceremonially stable.

The phrase **"instruments wherewith they slew the burnt offering"** refers to knives and other implements used in sacrifice. The Hebrew olah (עֹלָה, "burnt offering") means "that which ascends"—the entire animal consumed by fire, ascending as smoke to God. This was the most complete offering, symbolizing total consecration. That separate tables held the very instruments of death underscores the gravity of sin's penalty. Every knife, every stone surface stained with blood, proclaimed the truth that would find perfect expression in Christ: **"He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities"** (Isaiah 53:5).

Historical Context

Hewn stone had significance in Israel's worship—altars were to be made of unhewn stones (Exodus 20:25), but temple furnishings could use dressed stone where appropriate. The distinction between the eight wooden tables (v. 41) and these four stone tables suggests different functions: the eight for general slaughter, the four stone ones for burnt offerings specifically. Archaeological discoveries at ancient Israelite high places have uncovered similar stone installations used for sacrificial preparation.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does the permanence of hewn stone tables contrast with the temporary nature of old covenant sacrifices themselves?
2. What do the specific measurements and materials teach about God's character and His standards for worship?

Interlinear Text

וְאַרְבָּעָה	שְׁלֹחַן	וְעוֹלָה	אֶבֶן	יָזוּ	אֶרְךָ
And the four	tables	for the burnt offering	stone	were of hewn	long
H702	H7979	H5930	H68	H1496	H753
וְאֶחָד	וְאֶחָד	וְאֶחָד	וְרָחֵב	וְאֶחָד	וְאֶחָד
and a cubit	and one	and an half	broad	and a cubit	and one
H520	H259	H2677	H7341	H520	H259
וְגָבִהָ	וְאֶחָד	וְאֶחָד	וְאֵלֶיהֶם	וְיָנִיחוּ	אֶת
high	and a cubit	and one	H413	whereupon also they laid	H853
H1363	H520	H259		H3240	
הַכֵּלִים	אֲשֶׁר	יִשְׁחָטוּ	אֶת	וְעוֹלָה	בָּהֶם
the instruments	H834	wherewith they slew	H853	for the burnt offering	H0
H3627		H7819		H5930	
וְהַזֶּבֶחַ:					
and the sacrifice					
H2077					

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 40:39 (Sacrifice): 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.

Exodus 20:25 (Sacrifice): And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone: for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it.