

Ezekiel 43:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And thou shalt take of the blood thereof, and put it on the four horns of it, and on the four corners of the settle, and upon the border round about: thus shalt thou cleanse and purge it.

Analysis

The blood application—"thou shalt take of the blood thereof, and put it on the four horns of it, and on the four corners of the settle, and upon the border round about"—describes altar consecration. The Hebrew 血 (dam, 'blood') effects atonement and purification. The four horns (קֶרֶן, qeren) symbolize strength and refuge (Psalm 18:2, 118:27). Applying blood to horns, corners, and border comprehensively consecrates the altar—nothing left untreated. This teaches that atonement must be complete, not partial. Reformed theology sees Christ's blood comprehensively atoning—"the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). The fourfold application (horns, corners, settle, border) suggests complete coverage for all nations (four corners of earth).

Historical Context

Altar consecration paralleled priesthood consecration—both required blood application (Exodus 29:12, 36-37; Leviticus 8:15). The horns were altar's most sacred parts where blood was applied for sin offerings (Leviticus 4:7, 18, 25, 30, 34). Criminals fleeing to temple could grasp altar horns seeking sanctuary (1 Kings 1:50-51, 2:28). The settle (Hebrew אֶזְרָחָה, azarah) was a ledge or shelf midway up the altar. The border (גָּבוּל, gevul) defined altar boundaries. This comprehensive blood application sanctified the altar for holy use. Christ's blood sanctifies believers comprehensively—body, soul, spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:23). The altar's

one-time consecration parallels Christ's once-for-all sacrifice (Hebrews 9:26-28, 10:10).

Related Passages

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. Has Christ's blood been applied comprehensively to all areas of your life, or do some corners remain untouched?
2. What 'horns' (places of strength) in your life need blood application—recognizing that even strengths require redemption?
3. How does altar consecration's completeness challenge partial commitments that reserve areas from God's lordship?

Interlinear Text

וְلִקְחָתָ	מִדְםָם	וְלִקְחָתָ	אֶרְבָּעָה	קָרְנַתִּי
And thou shalt take	of the blood	thereof and put	it on the four	horns
H3947	H1818	H5414	H5921	H7161
וְאַל	בְּעִזָּה	פְּנֵי	וְאַל	סְבִּיבָּה
וְאַל	הַשְׁעִיר	וְתַ	בְּעִזָּה	וְתַ
H413	it on the four	corners	of the settle	and upon the border
H702	H6438	H5835	H413	H1366
וְחִטְאָתָ	וְכַפְרָתָהוּ	אֹתָ	וְכַפְרָתָהוּ	סְבִּיבָּה
thus shalt thou cleanse	and purge		and purge	round about
H2398	H853		H3722	H5439

Additional Cross-References

Leviticus 8:15 (Blood): And he slew it; and Moses took the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about with his finger, and purified the altar, and poured the blood at the bottom of the altar, and sanctified it, to make reconciliation upon it.

Leviticus 16:19 (Blood): And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel.

Exodus 29:12 (Blood): And thou shalt take of the blood of the bullock, and put it upon the horns of the altar with thy finger, and pour all the blood beside the bottom of the altar.

Exodus 29:36 (Parallel theme): And thou shalt offer every day a bullock for a sin offering for atonement: and thou shalt cleanse the altar, when thou hast made an atonement for it, and thou shalt anoint it, to sanctify it.

Ezekiel 43:22 (Parallel theme): And on the second day thou shalt offer a kid of the goats without blemish for a sin offering; and they shall cleanse the altar, as they did cleanse it with the bullock.

Ezekiel 43:26 (Parallel theme): Seven days shall they purge the altar and purify it; and they shall consecrate themselves.

Leviticus 9:9 (Blood): And the sons of Aaron brought the blood unto him: and he dipped his finger in the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar, and poured out the blood at the bottom of the altar: