

Numbers 4:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they shall put upon it all the vessels thereof, wherewith they minister about it, even the censers, the fleshhooks, and the shovels, and the basons, all the vessels of the altar; and they shall spread upon it a covering of badgers' skins, and put to the staves of it.

Analysis

The comprehensive inventory of altar vessels—censers, fleshhooks, shovels, and basins—demonstrates that every aspect of sacrifice was ordained by God. These instruments of atonement had to be properly covered and carried, teaching that the means of approaching God through sacrifice was not a human invention but divine revelation. The altar represents the centrality of substitutionary atonement in God's plan of redemption. Reformed theology sees this as prefiguring the ultimate sacrifice of Christ.

Historical Context

The bronze altar stood in the tabernacle courtyard where the daily burnt offerings and sin offerings were made. The instruments listed were used for removing ashes, turning the sacrifice, and handling the blood—all essential elements of the sacrificial system that maintained Israel's covenant relationship with God.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does the detailed regulation of altar vessels demonstrate that salvation is by God's prescription, not human merit?
2. What does the bronze altar's continual use teach us about the ongoing need for atonement?
3. In what ways do these Old Testament sacrificial instruments point forward to Christ's once-for-all sacrifice?

Interlinear Text

וְנָתַן וּ	אֶת עַלֵּיו	כָּל	כָּלֵי י	אֲשֶׁר	
And they shall put	H5921	H853	H3605	all the vessels	H834
H5414			H3627		
וְשָׂרָת וּ	אֶת בָּהֶם	עַל יוֹ	הַמִּחֹת ת		
thereof wherewith they minister	H5921	H0	H853	about it even the censers	
H8334				H4289	
אֶת הַמִּזְלָגֹת	וְאֶת	הַיָּעִים	וְאֶת	הַמִּזְרָקֹת	כָּל
H853	H853	and the shovels	H853	and the basons	H3605
the fleshhooks		H3257		H4219	
H4207					
כָּלֵי י	הַמִּזְבֵּחַ	וּפָרָשׁ וּ	עַל יוֹ	כָּס וְי	ע וֹר
all the vessels	of the altar	and they shall spread	H5921	upon it a covering	skins
H3627	H4196	H6566		H3681	H5785
בְּדֵיוֹ:	וְשָׂם וּ	תֵּי חֹשׁ			
to the staves	and put	of badgers			
H905	H7760	H8476			

