

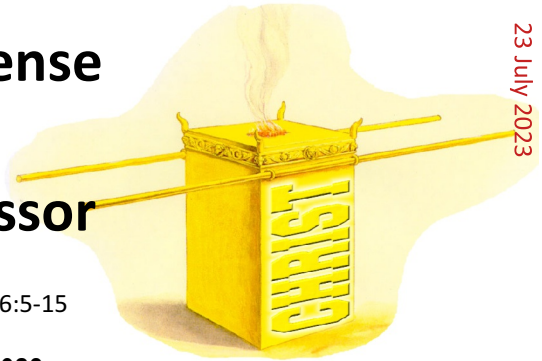
Altar of Incense

CHRIST

Our Intercessor

Exodus 30:1-10, 34-38

Romans 8:28-34; Matthew 6:5-15



Pressing Forward into 2023

- Catechism/Meditation

Eternal Purpose

What We Have Learned So Far

Common Factors Throughout

- ① Sacrifice is necessary for access to God
- ② The two natures of Christ
- ③ A suffering mediator is necessary
- ④ A close connection between Christ and His people
- ⑤ Sovereignty and human responsibility
- ⑥ Seriousness: LIFE or DEATH

The Golden Altar of Incense

- Most Holy - just like the Brazen Altar of Sacrifice
- Coals from the Altar of Sacrifice
- Coals and incense taken into the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement.

It's Construction

- Wood and Gold - two natures of Christ.
 - ▶ Hebrews 5:7; Luke 6:12; Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25
- It's "crown" - King of kings; royalty; majesty; sovereignty
- It's horns - symbols of power/strength

It's Position

- Placed before the Holy of Holies/Veil/Ark of Covenant
- In line with gate, brazen altar of sacrifice, the laver, and the mercy seat!

It's Purpose - a place of WORSHIP/PRAYER.

- **Prayer is CENTRAL in fellowship with God.**
 - God commands His people to pray ALWAYS.
 - God commands His people to pray AS HE TEACHES in His Word.
 - God commands churches to pray together.
- We are **commanded** to be “continuing steadfastly in prayer” (Romans 12:12; Colossians 4:2); to “always pray” (Luke 18:1-8); and to “pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17-18).
- A model for all prayers (ACTS):
 - ★ **A**doration - we were saved to “proclaim the praises of Him who called us out darkness into His marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9; **Isaiah 43:21**; Ephesians 1:6; Hebrews 13:15 “continually”; Psalm 99:1; 50:23; 1 Chronicles 16:25; **Psalm 48:1; 96:4; 145:1-3**)
 - ★ **C**onfession - as we learned from “the Laver” confession/repentance of our sins is something we are to do throughout the how day. We are to **mourn** our sins, confess them, and forsake them. (Matthew 5:4; Proverbs 28:13; Acts 17:30-31; Luke 13:1-5; 1 John 1:9)
 - ★ **T**hanksgiving - we are commanded to continually offer God praises of thanksgiving. We ought to be thanking Him for our salvation, His mercy that is new every morning, His grace, His protection, His preserving us, His physical blessings (food, shelter, clothing, health), His spiritual blessings (His Word, a Church to be part of, godly teachers, His Holy Spirit (all that He does in us continuously); etc. - **EVERYTHING!** (Hebrews 13:15; Psalm 50:14; 69:30-31; 107:21-22; 116:17-19; 136:1-26; Col 3:12, 17; Ephesians 5:19-20; Philippians 4:6; **1 Thessalonians 5:16-18**; Psalm 100:4)
 - ★ **S**uplications - (1 Peter 5:6-7; Philip 4:6) man does not know what he/she ought to pray (Romans 8:26) so we need the Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13). We must pray His will (not what we want) - only those prayers that are according to His will will He answer. (1 John 5:14-15)
- Answers to our prayers only come to those who **are** abiding in His Word, obeying His commandments, doing His will, and living in a way that pleases Him! (John 15:7-10; 1 John 3:22)

The Incense (Exodus 30:34-38)

- This incense was a picture of prayer in the Bible. (Revelation 5:8; 8:3-4; Psalm 141:2)
- Beaten, salted, pleasing, pure and holy, used for no other purposes.
- Unique blend - no other incense was to be used = *anything* else would be “strange incense” and not accepted by God. God dictates what pleases Him - *everything* else is but an imagination of man's heart.

- Anyone who made this incense for themselves would be “cut off from His people” (Exodus 30:33, 38)
- Three warnings from examples in Scripture:
 - ① (Leviticus 10:1-2) Aaron’s sons offered “strange incense” and were consumed by God’s fire.
 - ② (Numbers 16:35) Korah and his fellow rebels were consumed by God’s fire. They approached God seeking their own will were dissatisfied with God’s will.
 - ③ (2 Chronicles 26:16-21) God struck Uzziah with leprosy because he ignored God’s will.

Christ Pictured in the Incense

- Beaten - Isaiah 53:4-5, 10; Luke 22:63; Matthew 26:67
- Salted - (Colossians 4:6; Mark 9:50) “he is worth his salt”
 - Preservative; flavor; value; legal binding; promise to protect (even if they had been enemies in the past - John 10:27-28)
- Unique - there is none like Him! (Job 23:13; 1 Samuel 2:2; 7:22; 1 Chron 17:20; Isaiah 46:5, 9; 45:5-6, 14, 18, 21-22; **Acts 4:12**)
- Pure and Holy - without sin (1 John 3:5; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 2:22; 3:18; Revelation 3:7; 4:8; 6:10; 15:4; Mark 1:24)
- Sweet smelling/pleasing - Matthew 3:17; 17:5; Ephesians 5:2

Christ Is Our Altar of Incense

- Christ in heaven “crowned with glory and honor” (Hebrews 2:9; 1 Tim 6:15)
- Our Intercessor: Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2; John 17
- Still ministering for us. (Hebrews 8:1-6)
- Saved by His death (Romans 5:6-8) and much more by His life (Rom 5:9-11).

Our Prayers - Are They Sweet Incense?

- Necessity of cleansing before prayer - consider Proverbs 28:9; 15:8; 21:27
- The priest prayed in the morning and the evening.
 - We should have specific times for prayer.
 - At the START of our day.
 - At the END of our day.
 - Without ceasing. (1 Thess 5:17; Luke 18:1; Rom 12:12; Philip 4:6)
- The incense, a picture of our prayers, was to be made EXACTLY as God had directed.
- **WARNING #1:** STRANGE INCENSE was not to be offered on the Altar of Prayer. – This is prayer CONTRARY to God’s will and teaching.
 - We are to pray AS CHRIST TAUGHT US. (Luke 11:1-4; Matt. 6:9-13)

- **WARNING #2:** Only fire from the Altar of Sacrifice was to be used. (See Lev. 6:12-13; 16:12) Our prayers are to be based on Christ's substitutionary death and are only acceptable to God because of Christ's finished work on our behalf.
- **WARNING #3:** The incense was not to be made for another. OUR prayers MUST be according to HIS WILL not OURS. (Luke 22:42)
- **WARNING #4:** Not for ourselves - To use this incense for oneself was to be cutoff from the people. (James 4:1-3)
- **CONTRAST:** Isaiah 1:11-16; Amos 5:21-23 - Making God "sick".

Sweet Incense - Praying as We Are Taught (Matthew 6:5-15)

- **We speak to the King as He as instructed. - "pure and holy"**
- We are commanded to be "watchful and serious" in prayer. (1 Peter 4:7)
- (Luke 11:1; Matthew 6:9) "Teach us to pray . . . pray in this manner"
 - Pray acknowledging the Father sitting on His throne in heaven ruling the universe doing all things as He pleases. (Psalm 99:1; 9:7; 11:4; 22:28; 47:2; 66:7; 103:19; 115:3; 135:6; Daniel 4:17, 25, 34-35)
 - Pray that His NAME be HALLOWED in all that we do, say, and think. (Leviticus 10:3; Nehemiah 9:5; Psalm 34:3; 69:30; 111:9; Isaiah 6:3; Ezekiel 36:23; Psalm 99:3; **Malachi 1:11**)
 - Groan that His kingdom come. (Romans 8:23-25; 2 Corinthians 5:2-4; Hebrews 9:28; Titus 2:13)
 - Acknowledge that HIS WILL will be done today and submit to it. We pray, "If it pleases You and if we have found favor in Your sight." (Esther 5:4, 8; Isaiah 46:9-11; Psalm 115:3; 135:6; 33:11; Proverbs 19:21; 21:30; 16:9; 21:1; Daniel 4:30; Romans 11:33-34; Eph 1:9-11) Ask for grace to accept whatever happens!
 - Pray for forgiveness for yourself **and** your brothers and sisters. Acknowledge that we receive no forgiveness unless we forgive as we have been forgiven. (Matthew 6:14-15; 18:21-22, 28-35; Colossians 3:13; Ephesians 4:23; Luke 17:3-5)
 - Pray that God will provide you **and** your brethren physical and spiritual food for **today** so you can serve Him with you body and spirit. (John 6:47-49; 7:37-38; Hebrews 5:12-13; 1 Peter 2:1-3) Ask that for grace to be able to "run with endurance the race set before us" today.
 - Pray, because your spirit is willing but your flesh is weak, that God protect you **and** your brethren from the temptations of the world, Satan, and your own lusts. (Matthew 26:41; 1 Peter 5:8; 4:7; Titus 2:12; Ephesians 6:16; 1 John 5:19)
 - Pray that the ALMIGHTY GOD will deliver you **and** your brethren from ALL evil that will come at you TODAY! (Psalm 121; Jer 15:21; 17:15)