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Act 30 verses 1 through 10. These are god's words. You shall make an altar. To burn incense on. You should make it a vacation wood. A cubit shall be its length into cubit, its width. And shall be square. And two cubits shall be its height. It's horns shall be of one piece with it.

And you saw, overlay its top. It sides all around. And it's horns with pure. Gold. And you shall make for it. I'm molding of gold all around. Two gold rings. You so make for it under the molding. On, both its sides. You shall place them on its two sides.

And they will be holders for the poles with which to bear it. You shall make the poles of vacation wood and overlay them with gold. And you shall put it before the veil. That is before the ark of the testimony. Before the mercy seat, that is over the testimony.

Where i? Will meet with you. Aaron shall burn on it. Sweet incense every morning. When he tends the lamps. You shall burn incense on it. And when Aaron lights, the lamps at twilight. He shall burn incense on it. A perpetual incense before yahweh throughout your generations. You shall not offer strange incense on it.

Or. A burnt offering or A grain offering nor shall you pour a drink offering on it? And they're in shell makeup tonement upon its horns once a year. With the blood of the sin offering of atonement. Once a year, he shall make atonement upon it throughout your generations. It is Most.

Holy To your way. So far the reading of god's inspired and Inherent worked.

The incense altar was. One of the articles, one of the furnishings of the tabernacle that had great privilege of place, we'll hear about that in a moment, but you can probably see and already and still have that ringing in your ears and turning over in your mind the location of it.

And, and the way that even that, that location was described. Um, so it has privilege of place in the tabernacle. And yet it's a little bit out of place. In the sequence of the instructions for building the tabernacle, isn't it? Because the lord gave us in. In direct succession, several of the articles, including the the arc.

First of all, that is in the holy of holies and then the table and, and the lampstand that is in the holy place and and he gave us the The bronze altar that is outside and all of the All of the different coverings and veils and screens for doorways.

And we thought we had left the construction behind and moved on to garments for the priests and the ordination of the priest. And suddenly we're we're back, having a new. Peace of Tabernacle furnishing constructed. And, Um, We don't want to do like those who study the scriptures completely apart from faith altogether.

Who say aha? This is proof that A later adapter. Cobbled together these things and made up most of it as he went along. And Uh, you know, apparently the later redactor is Is so silly and stupid that he didn't know where to put this to make his Account of Exodus.

A free-flowing. And we don't want to be those who Uh, giving little Effort though. Trust in god, that this is his word. Uh, notice that there's something that seems out of place and just kind of shrug our shoulders and keep going. Rather than seeing that the lord here, wants to draw our attention to something, there's something in the context, there's something in the order.

That he wishes for us to see and what we see when we ask the question. Why here? Uh, is that that prevents the question where is here? And it's coming immediately upon. Uh, the instruction. Of the daily offerings, the lamb in the morning and the lamb in the evening.

That. Which was a conclusion of sorts for the ordination and consecration of both the priests and tabernacle. And so we're coming now. To the, to the furnishing of the, or the construction of the altar of incense. Coming immediately in the context of the The daily and continual ministry of the high priest and that corresponds doesn't it.

To how he describes the purpose of the altar of incense in verses 7 through 10. That there is not only emphasis in the context, but even within the passage, On the action. That is being. Taken in here taken here. And when he comes to that action, it too. Corresponds to the morning and evening sacrifice of the morning and evening lamb.

That would be offered continually. Like, we heard at the end of chapter 29, In fact, he doesn't just give us the morning and evening, time stamp as it, were for the burning of incense, or the renewal of the incense that is burning on the altar of incense. But he attaches it to a third thing that has done morning and evening.

In the tending of the lamps. And so, the lord has given us. Uh, enough data. Both in what it immediately flows from. And, Also in, how, what is in these 10 verses corresponds to what it immediately for it flows from that we're able to see, aha. His emphasizing to us.

The priestly activity that takes place on this incense altar, he's emphasizing to us The continuity. And continue all this or perpetuity? How constantly the morning and evening continuity. Is how what we landed on in the outline. The morning and evening continuity of that priestly activity. And so, we'll consider these Uh, these 10 verses.

Briefly under those three heads first, the privilege of place that it does have. Um, And then the emphasis upon the priestly activity and then the emphasis on the continuity, He describes it. Uh, to us and then he tells us where to put it in particular in verse 6. You shall put it before the veil.

In front of the veil near the veil and facing the veil, all of those ideas are contained in. This language before the veil. But it's not just before the veil he tells us and we already know. And children, as is often the case with you and your mom or your dad and they already know that, you know, something Uh, but either they know that you are also forgetful or they want to emphasize to you the importance.

They repeat the thing that, you know, And so he rehearses. Not just the veil that that the the altar of incense is put right in front of Uh, but wants us to connect that. As he says, he's a put it before the veil. Where's the veil? It's before the ark.

The box. What's in the box? The ark of the testimony. Where is where is this veil? It's not just before the ark of the testimony. It's before the mercy seat. That is over the testimony that atonement cover that lid upon which the blood from the day of atonement would come and we hear now in this passage that there's going to be a stop on the way.

To the mercy seat. That there's going to be blood to put on the horns of this incense altar outside. The veil before, the blood is brought through the veil to be put on the atonement cover. But even more directly to the point. Where i? Will meet with you in this.

Connects us back to chapter 29 as well because the consecration of the tabernacle because it was for the purpose of god, being in the midst of his people and his people being safe in his midst and even god being as a father to them, giving them his towah, giving them his fatherly instruction in verse 42 of the previous chapter.

Just a couple of verses before our passage begins. This will be a continual burn to offering throughout your generations at the door of the tabernacle of meeting before you always Where i will meet with you. To speak with you. And now we find that god is Meeting not just at the door, but in the holy of holies and not just in the holy of holies, But also right outside the veil of the whole thing, the whole place, he's meeting with them.

In this particular case he's not meeting to speak, but to hear and will Get to that in a moment. So as privilege of place, it's right in front of the veil, right in front of the test. When you write in front of the mercy seat, but more to the point right?

Where the lord, Will meet with his people. And it has this kind of hybrid construction when we think of the different things that have been made is you starts out saying in altar. And so we have in our mind having come through already, the other pieces of furniture and and this too allows us to make another connection because if if he had put it in order as he worked his way out of the holy of holies, we would hear about the altar of incense first and then the bronzalter.

Second But the way that the holy spirit has given this to us, we, we hear about the bronze alter first, the altar of burnt offering and sacrifice. First. And we hear an altar and we hear, and we start to think Uh, more atonement for sin. But it's not an altar for burnt offerings.

In fact, he forbids burnt offerings. And he forbids drink offerings on it. It's an ultra for incense and not just any incense, the incense of which he gives the particular recipe and no other incense at all. And so it's an altar, but it's not just an it's not just alter-ish, although it is an altar.

So we don't want to say ish too strongly there, but it's also arcish, isn't it? It's also table-ish Because it has the same box like construction as the arc. It's a little bit smaller. And as the table, it's a little bit smaller than the table. And table wasn't exactly a square.

But it's overlaid with gold with the rings of gold and the poles of gold. And so is it as it were, Uh, it has features of the altar that is on the outside. It's it's got the horns. Uh, similarly and things are going to be burned. On it.

But it's incense that has burned on and it's got features. Of the art. So, it's It's a unique piece, it has privilege of place. And the privilege of place and the unique in in the tabernacle. And then the uniqueness of place in the account draws, our attention, then especially to this priestly activity and this morning.

And evening, continuity that we heard about, First the priestly activity. Aaron shall burn on it. Sweet incense, every morning when he tends the lamps he saw burn incense on it. When Aaron likes the lamps at twilight, he shall burn incense on it a perpetual incense before yahway throughout your generation.

And then he goes on to. Forbid. Any other incense or any other use, and Than to describe Aaron making atonement for it, once a year that it is mostly to your way. But because of where we get this in the passage, We remember what the high priest is wearing.

And what's on his garments and that as he goes in there in its air, and it's not his sons who does this? It's Aaron. It's the one of the priests that has the names of the people on them, the tribes on them, it on his shoulders. But also, Over his chest.

From the pouch where are the, um, and the tumi. Which, People would use. By way of their high priest to ask god to give The right answer. And god would give the right answer. If we can borrow. From hebrews chapter 4. It is the Coming before the face of the throne.

To. Seek to obtain not seek. It's obtain. To find mercy and to obtain help. Then their time of need. And so that's what the priest is doing. Other passages shed some light on. Uh what this incense is for these. These were hours of prayer in particular your embers zechariah Um, john the baptizer's daddy when It was his turn to go in and burn the incense and it was the hour of prayer and he prolonged his time in there.

He didn't keep the clock as regular as some of the other priests had. And daniel. Even in his old age not for for 60, 70 years, almost 70, not quite Not having been in jerusalem or Had access to the time of the gathering for the morning and evening, sacrifices, but still keeping the hours of prayer.

And by that time, of course, Long since. Temple gone arc gone incense altar gone. And yet it was the hour of the morning and evening sacrifice. And for daniel, that was the hour. Of prayer. So regular even in his old age, so instilled in him by his hope in the christ to come and the god who hears prayers through the sacrifice of that christ.

That when Babylon was gone and persia. Was was around. The jealous persian governors knew that if they wanted to get daniel, they could do it using that hour of prayer.

We see in revelation 8 versus 3 and 4. What incense represents? Not that there's bowls and herbs and burning of herbs. Uh, in glory. But that it is the prayers of the saints. That just as we heard this morning that what paul does in Corinth matters because god has planned, christ has planned that what he was going to do in Corinth would be done during those 18 months and it would be done through the ministry of paul.

And what you do, dear Christian matters. As we heard this morning, the works that you have been given to to walk in. No one else is going to do them. No one else can do them. They've been appointed to you. And so the the sovereign providence and purpose of god establishes, the necessity of your duty.

It is not to be abused by your flesh and say well if God's going to accomplish all his will, anyway, i guess what i do isn't important. And for your praying actually matters in glory, doesn't it? Isn't how revelation eight three and four uses this? That is not just the saints in heaven, but the saints on earth, the incense literally intentionally goes up And we join.

Whenever we come to pray, we join the lord jesus already interceding for us. We joined the holy spirit to intercedes for us. We join probably if they're awake those 60 year old and up. True widows. We heard about in first Timothy five were praying. We joined perhaps our elders who have been divested of the diagonal ministry so that they can give more time to prayer.

We join the saints and glory, who are praying. And the spirit shows it to john with this picture. Of the bowls of incense that are the prayers of the saints. How marvelous that we and our union with christ? Who is our anchor and forerunner there? May have that participation in the ministry of heaven.

And when we are crying out and desperate in the psalm 141, verse one way, i cry to you. Make hastes, to me, give ear to my voice. When i cry out to you. We're encouraged by the fact. Of. Acacia box. Overlaid with gold in a particular place in a particular tent and later in a temple.

That god hears, the prayers of his people and he is pleased with them. For the sake of the atoning sacrifice, whose blood was spilled on the other altar. And when we have those Psalm 141 verse 1 desperation, we can come with the Psalm 141, verse 2 confidence and plea.

Let my prayer be set before you as incense the lifting of my hands as the evening sacrifice. I am here because you have commanded it lord. And i am here through the sacrifice that you have commanded and the sacrifice that i know will a tone and commend my prayer to you.

So, this is glorious. Priestly activity. Do you know that you need? The atonement of jesus. And the righteousness and the intercession. The priestly ministry of jesus for your prayers to be pleasing to god. That's what makes your prayers pleasing to god. Yes, you should pray. According to his will, you should pray according to his word, but there are many who open their mouths and fought in their hearts words, that corresponded to scripture.

But, because That came apart from the righteousness of jesus and they came in not in the repentance which goes with the faith. The clings to christ to commends our prayers. But an unrepentance. Which showed that there was no faith and no christ. And no atonement. No, common con commendation.

The scripture warns in many places. That prayer to god. Apart from christ is a offensive to him. He does not need or want. Our religious activity. And so isaiah 1 14 through 15, if you have an outline you have the passages there. We won't take the time to visit them all isaiah 59 1, through 3, mica three verse 4.

Psalm 66 verse 19. Proverbs 28 verse 9 Our prayers are actually offensive to god. Apart from jesus. But he puts an incense altar. And he commands it to be attended by a priest who bears the names of his people. And he makes the altar in the shape of the Alter for burnt offering and for sin offering and for peace offering that's outside.

And what happens there? There's a pleasing aroma. Sweet incense that goes up continually before god and he comes to us by the way of the incense altar by way of the priests activity and now by way of our great high priests continual activity, And he says, no. You don't deserve to call upon my name and you do deserve.

For me to hate your prayers. But all that you deserved. Was expended. On the altar of calvary. And the only alter that remains for you to visit. Is the throne where jesus is. The throne of grace. And what god hears from his people that comes through christ, it pleases him Not because you prayed well enough, not because you're meant it well enough.

Not, because you're asking for the right thing. He's given you, his spirit to intercede for you. It first of all, to help you. Because you don't know what to pray for as you are. It's not just that you don't know how you want to pray. We don't know what to pray for in the first place and whatever we do pray for then we don't know how to pray for it rightly.

And so the spirit helps us and he conforms us to christ, but he also intercedes for us.

And we can pray coming to god through jesus christ with complete liberty. The once for all effective sacrifice has been spilled, our high priest has taken up residence in the holy of holies. And as our prayers grow up, As our prayers go up, they are pleasing to god. They are sweet to him with the scent, not of a formula.

On earth. But to borrow an image, From a very, An infinite. An infinitely lower and worse thing. With the scent of his son. Remember isaac. And wanting to hear a request and wanting to answer that request. And he thinks it's Esau, because he's sitting against god, too, that all things amasses.

But jacob comes in. And Isaac at this point is indulgent and pleasure and And praise god for his patience. He's moved by food, but he's moved at the last by the smell. He's not sure, he's not sure, he's not sure. And jacob comes near and he says, ah, The smell of my son.

And the incense and the incense altar in israel, it wasn't about yet a formula and we're not going to have yes some kind of Indiana Jones, national treasure hunt for the right incense formula, you know, and then you publish it and in a book and sell a few million copies and You may, crossway heavy or whatever.

The incense formula was about the fact that only, god could provide the smell of his son. His son himself to be the one who makes our prayers pleasing in heaven and sweet in heaven, and we can come like a confident child to his daddy. Who loves him and loves to hear him and already knows what he's going to do for him and it's all it's even better than what the little boy is gonna ask for.

But he still loves to hear his son, ask The request itself. Pleases study. And in jesus christ, our praying itself, pleases god. Because he's worship, not just as the one who meets with us, to speak with us, verse 42 of Of chapter 29. He's worshiped as the one who meets with us to hear us.

All those stupid. Wicked idols of, man. They have lips, but they can't speak the living god meets with us to speak with us. They have ears, but they can't hear the living god meets with us to listen to us. They have hands and they can't do anything. The living god.

Is able to do all his holy will his Arm is not shortened. His hand is not weakened.

So there's this emphasis upon his priestly activity, and in the last place, there's the emphasis upon the morning and evening continueality. There's there's this triplet here. Wherever there's a triplet, there's Uh, there's strong. Emphasis you have the lamb that is offered in the morning and verse 39 and the lamb that has offered at the twilight and verse 41 and as we come morning and evening to god, we don't sacrifice lambs.

Any more. Whether you're talking about the holy convocation, that is the lord's day. The holy assembly would the sort of thing that we are are doing here or whether you're talking about the, the morning and evening family worship? That was commanded Deuteronomy 6 and would be would correspond to what was happening at the tabernacle, the sacrifices being offered and you know that you're coming through the blood of the lamb.

Morning and evening, in your home, day by day morning, and evening in the assembly week by week. When so our morning and evening worship too. It emphasizes to us. We have been at tone for we have been made righteous god dwells with us through the blood of the lamb. Know that the lord would sow bless and help those, who lead the family worship and those who are led in the family worship that that's what they would know, every morning and that's what they would know every evening.

There's not just the offerings. Of the lambs, there's also the tending of the lamps. In the morning, he makes the lamp good. Uh, The just Say it as literally, as it's said in in the original, in the morning, he makes the lamp good and then the evening, he makes the lamp to rise up.

And he's making sure everything is orderly after a nighttime of burning in the morning. And Um, In the evening is making sure that there's enough wick so that it's good and bright. Before he goes to bed, so it'll still be going when he comes in the morning. But you remember the lamp the shining of the light and And especially the golden light, the heavenly light.

Something, that was a A representation on on earth of a great spiritual reality. That would actually be pronounced upon them by the high priests Remember in numbers, chapter 6. And the pudding of the name of Of of god of yahweh upon the children of Israel. You remember how he said, the lord bless you and keep you.

And Make his face to shine. Upon you that lamb. That that lamp indicates favor. It was. Almost like it was. Someone took Eden remember with The tree and the flowers and the blossoms and the design and the the fellowship and the favorite of god that was lost from the garden.

It's now been condensed into a lamp and planted. In the holy place. And so, not only the, the atonement for us and our righteousness before god, morning and evening. But his favor towards us in our fellowship within Morning and evening. The light of god's face shining upon us. And now, the incense altar.

Our fellowship with god in his hearing us, Morning and evening. All three of those things should be part of of our corporate assembly morning and evening on the lord's day and of your family's assemblies. Morning and evening every day. And of your own. Worship of god. I know we need it.

I know i need it. I know you need it. To come through the atonement of christ to know you are forgiven. You are righteous to come with the light of god's face, shining and know that he smiles upon you and works all things together for your everlasting. Good, that you would be conformed to the sun and enjoy god, like jesus enjoys god, and That you would come knowing that god hears you That the heavens are not brass which are shut up to you that your prayers that go up.

Do not offend god. Like they would buy right. And in any other way, Accept that you have come through christ. And your prayer is unto the living. God as sweet incense is in our nostrils. And how pleased he is with us? He wants us to know him. As a god, who continually hears us, And so when we are having the psalm 141, verse 1 experience, i cry out to you.

Make haste to me give ear to my voice when i cry out to you. One of the reasons we can give the verse 2 answer, let my prayer be set before you as incense the lifting of my hands as the evening sacrifice. Is because he has spent our christian life, training, us morning, and evening, morning, and evening, morning, and evening, morning and evening through jesus.

My prayers are pleasing to god, because there are moments and our lives. Where we can see ourselves too well. And we dread that our prayers. Might be offensive to god that he might be refusing to hear us. But he's trained us. Through that repeated morning and evening participation with the continual intercession of our great high priest, and glory.

To say, let my prayer be set before you as incense and the lifting of my hands. As evening sacrifice. And we remember that, that Cube it by cubit box, outside the veil. Was just an earthly picture. Because our high priest. Now sits continually upon the throne, And he always lifts to intercede.

And he is able to save us to the other most and will By the power of his indestructible life. And now there's a world of believers. Is a morning and evening who's morning and evening. Well,

now, if believers are obeying, the bible, It literally is, continuously isn't it? He's covered the world.

With believers and their prayers. Go up continually A sweet incense. And are received by god who has pleased with them in christ and responding to them and carrying out all his holy will. Praise god. Let's pray.

Oh, our father. What glory, what joy it is to belong to you. To belong to you. Through your sown, our lord jesus by the help of your spirit. How much there is of the goodness of being your people of being atoned for or being justified. Of having your favor.

Of having your ear. How much there is that we have barely scratched the surface of and we learn and we study and we hear and we think and we meditate And what we find is, you are ever more worthy. Of our full trust. You are ever more worthy of our overflowing praise.

And we bless your name, and we ask that the work would continue by your holy spirit. Even in the name. That our lord himself gave us by which to come to you the name jesus. Amen.