

Christ In The Old Testament
“Sweet Incense”
Exodus 35:15; 30:1-10

Introduction:

1. We Were Reminded This Morning:
 - Of The Primary Purpose:
 - Of The Old Testament Scriptures:
 - When Jesus Said:
 - In John 5:39 - “They Are They Which Testify Of Me!”
 - And - This Is Especially True:
 - When It Comes To:
 - The Old Testament Tabernacle:
 - Which God Commanded Moses:
 - To Build In The Wilderness Of Mount Sinai!
2. In Exodus 29:42-46 - The Objectives For The Tabernacle:
 - Was Given To Moses!
 - It Was To Be The Place Where God Would:
 - Meet With His People!
 - Sanctify His People! And:
 - Dwell With His People:
 - So That His People:
 - Might Know Him!
 - And - All Of These Objectives:
 - Were Fulfilled Perfectly:
 - When Jesus Came:
 - And “Dwelt” / “Tabernacled” Among Us! (John 1:14)
 - And That Is Why - The Tabernacle As A Whole:
 - From Its Assembly:
 - To Its Articles:
 - Its Activities:
 - To Its Administration!
 - All Was A Picture & An Object Lesson:
 - To His People:
 - About The Person & The Purpose:
 - Of Jesus Christ!
3. Well - We’ve Been Using:
 - Exodus 35:11-19:
 - As An Outline In Our Search For Christ:
 - In The Tabernacle!
 - So - Let’s Turn Back There:
 - As We Continue To See Christ:
 - In The Various Furniture:
 - Of The Tabernacle!
4. In 35:11:
 - We Are Told About:
 - “The tabernacle, his tent, and his covering, his taches, and his boards, his bars, his pillars, and his sockets!”
 - These Articles Made Up:
 - The Tabernacle Structure Itself!
 - Which Pointed Us To:
 - The Person Of Christ:
 - With His Two Natures:
 - As Both Man & God!
5. In 35:12:
 - We Are Told About:
 - “The ark, and the staves thereof, with the mercy seat, and the vail of the covering!”
 - All Of These Articles:

- Were Part Of The Holy Of Holies:
 - Which Was The Exclusive Place:
 - Of God's Presence!
- And - All Of These Objects:
 - Inside This Room:
 - Point Us To Jesus Christ:
 - As The Greatest Treasure:
 - In All The World!

6. In 35:13:

- We Are Told About:
 - "The table, and his staves, and all his vessels, and the shewbread!"
- These Articles:
 - Were Placed On The North Side Of:
 - The Holy Place!
 - And - This Special Table:
 - Shows Us That Jesus Christ:
 - Is The Connection:
 - Between Heaven & Earth!
 - Between The Presence Of God:
 - And The People Of God!

7. In 35:14:

- We Are Told About:
 - "The candlestick also for the light, and his furniture, and his lamps, with the oil for the light!"
- These Articles:
 - Were Placed On The South Side:
 - Of The Holy Place!
 - And - This Menorah - With Its Seven Branches:
 - Holding Seven Lamps:
 - Shows Us That:
 - Just As Jesus Is The "Light Of The World" - We Too:
 - Are Called To Be The "Light Of The World!"

8. In 35:15:

- We Are Next Told About:
 - "The incense altar, and his staves, and the anointing oil, and the sweet incense, and the hanging for the door at the entering in of the tabernacle!"
- The "Incense Altar" Was Placed:
 - Between The Table Of Shewbread & The Menorah:
 - Right Up Against:
 - The Vail That Separated:
 - The Holy Place From The Holy Of Holies!
 - And - The Primary Text:
 - For The Construction Of This Alter:
 - Is Found In Exodus 30:1-11!
 - So - Let's Turn There Next!

* In 30:1-5 - We Are First Given:

1. The Plans For The Incense Altar!

- 30:1-5 - "And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: [of] shittim wood shalt thou make it. / 2 A cubit [shall be] the length thereof, and a cubit the breadth thereof; foursquare shall it be: and two cubits [shall be] the height thereof: the horns thereof [shall be] of the same. / 3 And thou shalt overlay it with pure gold, the top thereof, and the sides thereof round about, and the horns thereof; and thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold round about. / 4 And two golden rings shalt thou make to it under the crown of it, by the two corners thereof, upon the two sides of it shalt thou make [it]; and they shall be for places for the staves to bear it withal. / 5 And thou shalt make the staves [of] shittim wood, and overlay them with gold!"
 - When It Comes To The Plans Of The Incense Altar:
 - We See:
- The Harmony Of The Altar:
 - With The Rest Of The Objects & Articles:

- In The Tabernacle!
- The Incense Alter Was:
 - 3 Feet High & 1.5 Feet Deep & Wide!
 - And - It Was Made:
 - In A Similar Way:
 - As The Other Artifacts Within The Tabernacle!
 - So That All Of The Interior Furniture:
 - Matched - In Its Glory, Value & Beauty!
- It Was **Made** Of In The Same Way:
 - As The Ark Of The Covenant:
 - And The Table Of Shewbread!
 - With Shittim / Acacia Wood!
- It Was **Overlaid** In The Same Way:
 - As Those Articles As Well:
 - With Pure Gold!
- It Was **Decorated** In The Same Way:
 - With A “Crown” - Or Filigree - “Of Gold”:
 - “Round About!”
- And - It Was **Carried** In The Same Way:
 - As All Of The Objects:
 - That We’ve Looked At So Far!
 - With Gold Rings & Gold Covered Staves!
- So - The Altar Of Incense:
 - Was Closely Associated With:
 - All Of The Objects:
 - In Both Rooms:
 - Of The Tabernacle!
- One Again:
 - This Object Is A Picture:
 - Of The Glory & Value & Beauty:
 - Of Jesus Christ!
 - In Other Places:
 - The Altar Of Incense:
 - Is Simply Called:
 - The “Golden Altar!”
 - And This Is What:
 - Jesus Christ Is To:
 - Us - As His People!
- So - There Was Great Harmony:
 - In All Of These Objects:
 - Within The Tabernacle!
 - However - There Was:
 - One Main Difference:
 - Between This Golden Altar:
 - And The Rest!
 - And That Is:
- The Horns Of The Altar!
 - According To 30:3 - It Was The Only Object Inside The Tabernacle:
 - Built With “Horns!”
 - Four - Horn-Like Protrusions Cast In Gold On Each Corner!
 - And So - The Altar Of Incense:
 - Was At The Same Time:
 - Associated With:
 - The Brazen Altar Of Sacrifice:
 - That Stood Outside The Tabernacle!
 - These “Horns” Were Symbols:
 - Of A Complete Power & Strength:
 - Which Means That:

- Whatever Took Place At The Altars:
 - Was Powerful & Strong!
- And - The Incense Alter:
 - Like Its Outside Counterpart:
 - Was A True Altar!
 - A Place Of Sacrifice!
 - But - The Sacrifice At:
 - This Altar:
 - Was A Different Kind:
 - Of Sacrifice!
 - Not A Sacrifice Of Blood:
 - But Of Incense!
- As Our Golden Altar:
 - The Lord Jesus Christ:
 - Is Mighty & Strong!
 - And - His Strength:
 - Is What Connects:
 - His People With His Presence!

* In 30:6 - We Are Then Given:

2. *The Placement Of The Incense Altar!*

- 30:6 - “And thou shalt put it before the vail that [is] by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat that [is] over the testimony, where I will meet with thee!”
 - When It Comes To The Placement Of:
 - The Altar Of Incense:
 - It Was First Located In:
 - The Place Of God’s Special Service!
 - That Is - In The Larger & Outer Room:
 - Of The Tabernacle:
 - Called - The Holy Place!
 - So - It Was Placed:
 - In The Middle Of The Holy Place:
 - Right Up Against The Vail:
 - Of Separation!
 - But - Its Placement Was Primarily Focused On:
 - The Place Of God’s Special Presence!
 - That Is - The Inner Room & Sanctuary:
 - Of The Tabernacle:
 - Called - The Holy Of Holies!
 - And - The Altar Was Situated:
 - So That The Priest Who Served At It:
 - Would Directly Face The Ark & Its Mercy Seat - Where:
 - God Said - “I Will Meet With Thee!”
 - The Priest Would:
 - Face It - But:
 - Without Seeing It!
 - So - Whatever Took Place:
 - At This Altar:
 - Had A Deep Connection:
 - To Both Rooms Of The Tabernacle!
 - The Place Of God’s Special Service:
 - In The Holy Place! And:
 - The Place Of God’s Special Presence:
 - In The Holy Of Holies!
 - And This Too Is True:
 - Of Jesus Christ!
 - Because - As Our “Golden Altar”:
 - Jesus Is The One Who:

- Prays & Intercedes:
 - For Us!
- Jesus Interceded For Us:
 - On Earth!
 - Even In His Prayer In:
 - John 17:20 - “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word!”
- Jesus Intercedes For Us:
 - In Heaven!
 - Hebrews 7:25 - “Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them!”
- This Altar Of Incense:
 - Is A Picture Of:
 - One Of The Primary Heavenly Ministries Of Christ:
 - For Us - Even Today!
 - Intercession!

* But Then - Further - In 30:7-8 - We Find:

3. *The Procedure Of The Incense Altar!*

- 30:7-8 - “And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. / And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations!”
 - From These Verses:
 - We Learn That The Burning Of Incense:
 - Was To Be:
 - A Pleasing Sacrifice!
 - It Was To Be:
 - A Sacrifice Of “Sweet Incense!”
 - And In 30:34-38 - God Gave Moses:
 - The Exact Recipe For This Incense!
 - 30:34-38 - “And the LORD said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum; [these] sweet spices with pure frankincense: of each shall there be a like [weight]: / And thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, tempered together, pure [and] holy: / And thou shalt beat [some] of it very small, and put of it before the testimony in the tabernacle of the congregation, where I will meet with thee: it shall be unto you most holy. / 37 And [as for] the perfume which thou shalt make, ye shall not make to yourselves according to the composition thereof: it shall be unto thee holy for the LORD. / 38 Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people!”
 - So - This Incense - When Burned:
 - Was To Give Off A:
 - A Unique & Pleasant Aroma:
 - Both To God & To Aaron & The Priests As Well!
 - But - We Also See That:
 - The Burning Of Incense:
 - Was To Be:
 - A Perpetual Sacrifice!
 - It Was To Take Place:
 - Every Morning & Every Evening:
 - In Connection With:
 - The Service Of The Menorah:
 - At Those Same Times!
 - Now - Even Though:
 - The Golden Altar:
 - Is A Symbol Of:
 - Christ & His Ministry:
 - Of Prayer & Intercession:
 - For Us!
 - It Is The Sweet Incense:

- That Is A Symbol Of:
 - Christians & Our Ministry:
 - Of Prayer & Intercession:
 - For Others!
- In Psalm 141:1-2 - David Brings This Imagery To Us:
 - When He Wrote:
 - “LORD, I cry unto thee: make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee. / Let my prayer be set forth before thee [as] incense; [and] the lifting up of my hands [as] the evening sacrifice!”
- And - This Is Carried Forward:
 - Even Into The New Testament:
 - Especially In Revelation!
 - 5:8 - “And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four [and] twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints!”
- And - It Is Christ:
 - And His Work Of Intercession:
 - That Makes Our Prayers:
 - Possible & Pleasing:
 - To God The Father!
 - So Now - Through Christ:
 - Your Prayers Are:
 - “Pure, Holy, Fervent, And Fragrant!” (John Gill)
 - That Is Why We Are Told In:
 - Hebrews 4:16:
 - “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need!”
 - Now - In Christ:
 - You Can Approach:
 - The Throne Of God’s Grace:
 - Boldly! “Fearless Freedom!”
 - Do You Believe This?
 - Do You Do This?
 - You Can - Because - Christ Himself:
 - As Our Golden Altar:
 - Perfects & Presents Our Prayers:
 - In A Way That Makes Them:
 - Pleasing To God!
- Now - You Can & Should:
 - “Burn” The “Sweet Incense” Of Prayer:
 - At The Same Time - And:
 - In The Same Way:
 - As The Priests Did:
 - In The Tabernacle!
 - You Can Go “Boldly Unto The Throne Of Grace!”
 - Every Morning & Evening!
 - And Even - “Perpetually!”
 - “Pray Without Ceasing!” (1 Thess. 5:17)
 - You Can Go “Boldly Unto The Throne Of Grace!”
 - Even As You Attend To:
 - The Other Means Of:
 - Service & Fellowship & Worship:
 - With The Lord!

* Then - In 30:9-10 - We Are Told About:

4. *The Purity Of The Incense Altar!*

- 30:9-10 - “Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering; neither shall ye pour drink offering thereon. / And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the horns of it once in a year with the blood of the

sin offering of atonements: once in the year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations: it [is] most holy unto the LORD!”

- Now - Even Though:
 - This Altar - Inside The Tabernacle:
 - Had A Connection With:
 - The Altar - Outside The Tabernacle:
 - The Offerings Were Different!
 - The Offerings At The Brazen Altar:
 - Which Included Their:
 - “Burnt Sacrifice” & “Meat Offering” & Drink Offering!”
 - They All Had To Be Taken Care Of:
 - **There** - In Order To Prepare For The Worship:
 - That Would Take Place:
 - **Here** - At The Altar Of Incense!
 - And So It Is With:
 - Our Approach To:
 - The “Throne Of Grace!”
 - Christ Makes Us:
 - Approachable To The Lord:
 - So That We Can Pray!
 - In Isaiah 53:12:
 - It Was Even Prophesied That:
 - Christ Would Make:
 - “Intercession For The Transgressors!”
 - This Is Where It All Starts!
 - Any Other Offering Or Prayer:
 - That Is Not Based On:
 - Christ & His Intercession:
 - Is “Strange Incense!”
 - Also - It Is “Strange Incense” To Offer:
 - Any Other Offering Or Prayer:
 - To Anyone - Other Than:
 - God - And:
 - Through Anyone - Other Than:
 - Jesus & In His Name!
 - But - In Addition To:
 - Making Us Approachable To The Lord:
 - He Also Makes Us:
 - Acceptable To The Lord:
 - As We Pray! Because:
 - One Time Per Year:
 - Some Of The Blood From The Outside Altar:
 - Would Be Placed On The Horns:
 - Of This Inside Altar:
 - To “Make Atonement” For It!
 - So That - The Rest Of The Year:
 - The Offering Of Incense:
 - Might Be Acceptable:
 - To The Lord!
 - But - What Did Jesus Do?
 - In Hebrews 10:10:
 - We Are Told That - “We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once [for all]!”
- It Is Christ:
 - Who Perfects & Purifies:
 - You & Your Prayers:
 - So That They May Be:
 - Acceptable To Him!

Conclusion:

1. Imagine If You Were One Of The Priests:
 - Who Had The Honor:
 - To Burn The Sweet Incense:
 - Upon The Golden Alter Of Incense!
 - As You Placed:
 - The Incense:
 - On The Hot Coals From The Brazen Alter:
 - The Fragrance & The Smoke:
 - Would Spread From The Holy Place Into The Holy Of Holies:
 - And Into The Very Presence Of God!
2. This Is What Jesus Makes Possible:
 - For You & For Me!
 - So That - Now - You Can Offer:
 - The “Sweet Incense” Of Prayer:
 - Which Immediately Goes Up To:
 - The Lord In Heaven!
 - Where - He Hears You!
 - He Answers You! And:
 - He Is Pleased With You:
 - All Because Of:
 - Christ!
3. Will You Take The Opportunity:
 - Even More - This Week:
 - To Offer The “Sweet Incense” Of Your Prayer:
 - To The Lord?

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