

INSIDE THE TABERNACLE

TEXT: EXODUS: 30:1-10, 34-38

LESSON SIX - THE GOLDEN ALTAR OF INCENSE

INTRODUCTION: Farther on, close up to the "Veil," stood a small altar, of wood covered with gold, called the "Golden Altar" or "Incense Altar." It had no fire upon it except what the priests brought in the censers which they set in the top of this "Golden Altar," and then crumbled the incense upon it, causing it to give forth a fragrant smoke or perfume, which, filling the "Holy," penetrated also beyond the "second veil" into the Most Holy or Holy of Holies.

THE PLAN GIVEN FOR THE GOLDEN ALTAR

1. The Golden Altar of Incense was smaller than the Brazen Altar measuring 1.5 feet and was **3** feet high.
2. The Golden Altar of Incense was similar to the Table of Shewbread, because it was made of acacia wood and overlaid with pure **gold**.
3. The Golden Altar of Incense was similar to the Table of Shewbread, because it had a golden **crown** round the top of it.
4. The Golden Altar of Incense had **four** horns protruded from the four corners.
5. The Golden Altar of Incense was located right in **front** of the curtain (veil) that separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies.

THE PURPOSE OF THE GOLDEN ALTAR

1. God commanded the priests to **burn** incense on the golden altar every morning and evening, the same time that the daily burnt offerings were made.
2. The incense was to be left burning continually throughout the day and night as a **pleasing** smell to the Lord.
 - ✓ When the Holy Place smelled like incense, it blocked out the smell of burning **flesh** that came from the Brazen Altar.
3. The incense was burnt on pieces of hot **coals**, which the priest removed in a censer or fire pan from the Brazen Altar in the courtyard.
 - ✓ The hot coal had to come from the Brazen Altar. If it came from any other place it was called strange fire, and it meant certain **death**. - Lev. 10:1-3

NOTES:

Psalms 141:1-2
1 Peter 2:9
2 Chronicles 29:5-7
Revelation 8:2-4

Today, there is no veil separating us from the throne of God.

Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu took their censers, put fire in them and added incense; and they offered strange fire before the Lord, contrary to his command. So fire came out from the presence of the Lord and consumed them, and they died before the Lord.



The Golden Altar of Incense

INSIDE THE TABERNACLE

4. The common priest would burn incense on the altar over **700** times a year and the High Priest would bring the incense beyond the veil once a year on the Day of Atonement. - Lev. 16:12

THE PICTURES WE SEE IN THE GOLDEN ALTAR

1. The Golden Altar of Incense is a picture of the intimate prayer life of a Christian.
 - ✓ The sweet smell of incense was a picture of the prayers and intercession of the people going **up** to God as a sweet fragrance.
 - ✓ The Golden Altar of Incense is called " the perpetual incense " and shows that we should **continually** offer to God a sacrifice of praise - the fruit of lips that confess his name.
 - ✓ The Tabernacle was the dwelling place (house) of God, and it is God's desire that His house should be a house of **prayer**. - Isaiah 56:7
 - ✓ The location of the Golden Altar of Incense (in front of the veil) symbolizes how **close** a Christian can get to God with an effective prayer life.
 - ✓ Outside was the stench of burning flesh, inside was the sweet smell of incense. God wants His children to **dwell** in the sweet smell of incense.
 - ✓ Before the Priests could offer the incense of prayer, their had to be a **sacrifice** at the Brazen Altar, then a **washing** of the hands and feet at the Brazen Laver.
2. The Golden Altar of Incense is a picture of the intercessory work of Jesus Christ.
 - ✓ The Golden Altar of Incense is a picture of the **worship** God's people have through Jesus Christ as our high priest and mediator. It was only on the basis of His one sacrifice on the altar of the cross that worship is made possible.
 - ✓ The Golden Altar of Incense is a picture of the Lord. It tells of His ministry of intercession today. This is why we **pray** "in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" because it is solely through His merit, not our own merit or power.

*For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved...
2 Corinthians 2:15*

Three Types of Smoke within the Tabernacle

- ✓ The Smoke of Sacrifice.
- ✓ The Smoke of the Altar of Incense.
- ✓ The Smoke that came from God's Glory.

The incense, combined with the coals from the Brazen Altar, produce the smoke. In other words, Christ, combined with our prayers produces a sweet smell towards God.

A Christian's prayers can only go as far as the veil. We need someone who can take them pass the veil and into the throne of Grace.