

## **THE TABERNACLE OF MOSES**

### **"The High Priest, the Incense, and the Day of Atonement"**

#### **Proclamation-**

Ps 43:3-5

- 3 O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.
- 4 Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God.
- 5 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God. (KJV)

#### **Aaron Stops the Plague-**

Num 16:41-48

- 41 The next day the whole Israelite community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. "You have killed the LORD's people," they said.
- 42 But when the assembly gathered in opposition to Moses and Aaron and turned toward the Tent of Meeting, suddenly the cloud covered it and the glory of the LORD appeared.
- 43 Then Moses and Aaron went to the front of the Tent of Meeting,
- 44 and the LORD said to Moses,
- 45 "Get away from this assembly so I can put an end to them at once." And they fell facedown.
- 46 Then Moses said to Aaron, "Take your censer and put incense in it, along with fire from the altar, and hurry to the assembly to make atonement for them. Wrath has come out from the LORD; the plague has started."
- 47 So Aaron did as Moses said, and ran into the midst of the assembly. The plague had already started among the people, but Aaron offered the incense and made atonement for them.
- 48 He stood between the living and the dead, and the plague stopped. (NIV)

*In this account, we see the major function of the High Priest in his role as intercessor, covering over the sins of the people. Moses instructed Aaron to run into the congregation with incense burning. We have looked at the Altar of Incense. Let us now take a closer look at the incense itself.*

Exod 30:34-36

- 34 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Take fragrant spices-- gum resin, onycha and galbanum-- and pure frankincense, all in equal amounts,
- 35 and make a fragrant blend of incense, the work of a perfumer. It is to be salted and pure and sacred.
- 36 Grind some of it to powder and place it in front of the Testimony in the Tent of Meeting, where I will meet with you. It shall be most holy to you. (NIV)

*The incense had five ingredients:*

- 1. Gum resin (stacte)- comes from the sap of a fragrant tree. The word itself means "to drop" or "to distill."*

Deut 32:1-2 (KJV)

- 1 Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.
- 2 My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass:

Job 29:22-25

- 22 After I had spoken, they spoke no more; my words fell gently on their ears.
- 23 They waited for me as for showers and drank in my words as the spring rain.
- 24 When I smiled at them, they scarcely believed it; the light of my face was precious to them.
- 25 I chose the way for them and sat as their chief; I dwelt as a king among his troops; I was like one who comforts mourners. (NIV)

*This stacte is more than likely distilled drops of myrrh. As you can well imagine, myrrh figures large in the Bible. Not only was it used in His embalming after the crucifixion, it is Biblically the smell of the Bride and Bridegroom.*

Song 4:11-14

- 11 Your lips drop sweetness as the honeycomb, my bride; milk and honey are under your tongue. The fragrance of your garments is like that of Lebanon.
- 12 You are a garden locked up, my sister, my bride; you are a spring enclosed, a sealed fountain.
- 13 Your plants are an orchard of pomegranates with choice fruits, with henna and nard,
- 14 nard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, with every kind of incense tree, with myrrh and aloes and all the finest spices. (NIV)

Song 5:13 (NIV)

His cheeks are like beds of spice yielding perfume. His lips are like lilies dripping with myrrh.

*From the root word of nataph (drops of stacte), we see that it also stands for sweet, prophetic intercession (Ez. 20:46; 21:2; Am. 7:16; Micha 2:6, 11). Myrrh is also the gall that was put into his drink on the cross (Mark 15:33; Matt. 27:34; Ps. 69:21).*

2. *Onycha- the upper shell of a Red Sea mollusk. Its preparation included burning the shell and crushing it. The mollusk brings to mind not casting our pearls before swine (Matt. 7:6), the pearl of great price (Matt. 13:45-46), and the pearly gates (Rev. 21:21). That the shell had to be burned reminds us that the veil (his body) was rent (Matt. 27:51; Heb. 10:19-20) and because he went through the fire of Calvary, he now can baptize us with fire (Matt. 3:11; Acts 2:3-4).*
3. *Galbanum- the sap or gum from a plant or tree-like shrub. It was bitter and used for driving away insects.*
4. *Frankincense- is white in color. White speaks to us of purity and righteousness. It was one of the gifts brought to the Sun of Righteousness (Mal. 4:2).*
5. *Salt- salt acts both as a preservative and a seasoning. It is a case study all of its own. The Lord commanded that "with all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt." (Lev. 2:13c). In regard*

*to intercession (incense) it speaks of the pinnacle of graceful words (Col. 4:6).*

*All these ingredients were of equal weight and were crushed fine, beaten very small and blended together. In like manner, our Lord Jesus Christ was crushed fine and beaten small in his whole being: spirit, soul, and body.<sup>1</sup>*

Isa 53:5

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was **crushed** for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. (NIV)

*The incense had five ingredients of equal measure. This speaks of balance and grace (five being the number of grace in Scripture). The incense was:*

*Sweet - Christ's ministry was filled with sweetness and fragrance.*

*Pure - Christ was absolutely pure and holy.*

*Holy - Christ ministered in absolute holiness and sinlessness (Heb. 7:26).*

*Perpetual - Christ ministers in the power of an endless life. He ever lives to make intercession for us (Heb. 7: 25-26).*

*Perfume - Christ's whole life was a fragrance to the Father (Eph. 5:2).*

*From 1 Tim. 2:1 and Ps. 104:34 speak of the five ingredients of prayer: supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings, and meditations.*

### **The High Priest-**

Exod 28:1-5

1 "Have Aaron your brother brought to you from among the Israelites, along with his sons Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, so they may serve me as priests.

2 Make sacred garments for your brother Aaron, to give him dignity and honor.

3 Tell all the skilled men to whom I have given wisdom in such matters that they are to make garments for Aaron, for his consecration, so he may serve me as priest.

4 These are the garments they are to make: a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a woven tunic, a turban and a sash. They are to make these sacred garments for your brother Aaron and his sons, so they may serve me as priests.

5 Have them use gold, and blue, purple and scarlet yarn, and fine linen. (NIV)

*The main robe was of white linen. White linen is the righteous acts of the saints (Rev. 19:8). It speaks of purity and holiness. Over this was put on the woven tunic. This was woven of one piece. Blue speaks not only of the authority of heaven, but is also emblematic of active holiness as the white robe is of intrinsic holiness.*

Num 15:37-40

37 The LORD said to Moses,

38 "Speak to the people of Israel, and bid them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put upon the tassel of each corner a cord of blue;

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<sup>1</sup>I owe these insights and descriptions of the holy incense to Kevin Connor, *The Temple of Moses*, 1976, Portland, Oregon, p. 51

39 and it shall be to you a tassel to look upon and remember all the commandments of the LORD, to do them, not to follow after your own heart and your own eyes, which you are inclined to go after wantonly.

40 So you shall remember and do all my commandments, and be holy to your God. (RSV)

*The ephod was woven of gold, scarlet, blue, purple, and finely woven linen (white), the same ingredients in the veil. Over this was worn the breastpiece of judgment (shoulder stones and front stones). In the breast piece was the Urim and Thummim (Ex.28:30). No one knows what they were, but they were used to hear from God. The real import, I believe, is that they were the Aleph and the Tav, the Alpha and the Omega (Rev. 1:8), the beginning and the end (Is. 44:6).*

### **The Day of Atonement-**

Lev.16:(31); Heb. 9-10; poem in Tabernacle.