

The altar of incense

Part 1

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Note: This text is a computer generated transcript of the sermon. In some cases it may contain errors.

[00:00:01] We read in Exodus chapter 7.

Exodus chapter 7, beginning at verse 1.

Exodus 13, verse 1.

[00:01:01] And thou shalt make unto it a crown of gold around the body, and two gold rings shalt thou make to it under the crown of it, while 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 the door. And thou shalt make the staves of shittim-wood, and overlay them with gold. And thou shalt put it before the veil, that is, by the ark of the testimony, before the mercy seat, that is over the testimony, where I will meet with thee.

And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning. When he addresses the lamp, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lights the lamp at evening, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations.

Ye shall offer up no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering, neither shall ye pour drink of it thereon.

And Aaron shall make an atonement upon the harlot of it once in a year with the blood of the same offering of atonement. [00:02:05] Once in a year shall he make atonement upon it throughout your generations. It is most holy unto the Lord.

Further down in the chapter in verse 24.

And the Lord said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweet spices, and plant them in the land.

These sweet spices with pure frankincense, of each shall there be a light weight.

And thou shalt make it a perfect, a confection after the heart of the apostate, tempered together, pure and holy.

And thou shalt keep 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.

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. [00:03:03] Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell that perfume, shall neither be cut off from his feet.

Now I'd like us to turn over to the New Testament, because I always like to read a verse in the New Testament, and I read something in the Old Testament. And the Old is in me. The New is in the Old continually.

And the Old is by me.

So we'll turn to Revelation chapter 5.

First of all.

Revelation chapter 5.

And verse 8.

Revelation chapter 5, verse 8. And when he, that is the Lamb, had taken the book, the four living creatures, and twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb.

And twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb.

[00:04:05] I mean everyone in the cross. And golden vials full of waters, which are prayers of sins.

And in Colossians chapter 4.

Colossians chapter 4.

Colossians chapter 4, verse 12.

In the flasks, who is one of you?

A servant of Christ, saluting you.

Always laboring fervently for you in prayers.

That ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

Always laboring fervently for you in prayers.

That ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

For I bear in record that he hath a great zeal for you. And them that are in Laodicea, and them in

Hiawatha.

I am, dearly beloved, my desire is that our hearts may be encouraged today.

[00:05:13] There is a great need around for the Lord.

For him, it is a great interest to keep in company with him. And I just thought, this is perhaps one service that is a bit neglected.

And it's a service that all of us can engage in.

From the youngest to the oldest.

I remember a hearing of a brother and his two and a half year old daughter.

Who used to pray when he went to preach the gospel.

And of course, saints all through Canada, until they're in the 90s, and even beyond, can pray and intercede.

And it's a service that is very necessary today.

Of course, we need to all be revived in our hearts.

[00:06:05] But I'm not here to judge your hearts. I'm not here to say whether you need revival or not.

I would presume you do so.

You, each and every one of us, must answer before God in that respect.

But I am pretty certain, as far as one can be humanly speaking, that your hearts are on fire for the Lord.

I'm not complimenting you. No, you have a desire to serve the Lord. Perhaps this is one way that we are sometimes a little bit neglectful of the need of intercession.

Now of course, we can't really just set intercession before ourselves for its own sake.

No, we must in all things have a passion for that intercession.

And who better than the great and wonderful interceder, the Lord himself.

[00:07:06] The Lord Jesus Christ himself.

Wonderful, great interceder.

Now here we have this vulture, this wonderful, lovely type.

This vulture of burning insects. Burning insects. You're all very familiar with the tabernacle system of chapters 25, 26, 27.

All the various settings of it.

Starting from the arc of working outwards, right out to the coat and the gate in.

All these things.

And then of course, there needs to be a priesthood to serve in there, mustn't there?

So you see how that priesthood is set up and the wonderful promise that the High Priest has.

And then of course, there are things that we must do.

And there must be a basis for them.

And here is this vulture for the burning of insects.

[00:08:05] And it was of acacia wood.

The wood that was used elsewhere in the tabernacle. Very strong wood from the desert.

Able to stand up in all the beating of the winds and the dust storms and things like that.

And they wouldn't rot away. Very, very strong wood.

And it was to be a cubit long and a cubit broad.

And got two cubits in height.

Height was twice that of its red leg.

And the red leg square, you see the significance of that presently.

And it was two cubits high.

Two cubits high.

And then it said, you shall overlay it with pure gold.

So the cubit itself shall be its horns.

[00:09:04] And it wasn't just cut as a block of wood. No, a solid block, I say. Not like the ark, which was hollow.

Four boards obviously put together.

Probably shaped out, but it was hollow.

And we know of course there were three things put into that ark. Of great significance. Not my purpose at the moment is to dwell on that. But here was a solid block of wood.

And it seems to bring before me the stability, the immovability of the Lord.

In this great work of intercession. Not to be moved away. You see, not to be moved away.

The stability of it, I think. And we know of course how the wood, the chitin wood, speaks of his blessing, his wonderful humanity.

And as man here, overlaid with pure gold.

[00:10:03] Overlaid with pure gold. All the top and sides, round about.

And these horns that speak forth the power.

The blessed power of our blessed Lord. The blessed Lord.

His availability and his power outreaching. And these horns were shaped out of the same block of wood. They weren't attached in any way. No, and it was cut out. We were carved into these alleles. He carved them out. And they were a one part. And then they were covered with gold. And we see in that wonderful way, our blessed Lord here. Great is the mystery of God in us. Great is the mystery of God in us. God was manifest in the flesh, yes. There we see this blessed one. Who became man.

As it says in Luke chapter 2.

That holy thing which shall be born.

Not born of thee, no. That holy thing which shall be born. The power of the highest shall overshadow thee. And that holy thing shall be gone.

[00:11:03] Shall be called Son of God. Now of course, I shouldn't need to mention to you. You're probably all aware. In passing, that he wasn't given the name. Son of God at that time. No, no.

As some may in error have tried to say today.

No, no.

That was his name.

That was what he never had with him. And it was just in case. Poor, frail man.

Which I am very like him. Glory.

Bring down his glory to mere humanity. The Holy Spirit is making it clear. I'm sure.

That blessed name he had for all eternity. Will be called upon him here even. As he was a man in this scene. That holy thing which shall be born. Son of God.

The son of God.

At his home tonight. So. He was here for the pleasure of God. As a man.

[00:12:02] Wonderful mystery.

Wonderful mystery indeed. And. Over there.

And then there was this border around it. Of gold.

Crown to it.

Wonderful border of it. Showing for something of the glory of our blessed Lord. And we know that many crowns are his head. Glory firstborn son of God. Yes. As you know it's rather significant you see. That this altar.

Is higher than the brazen altar. Oh no it isn't you see. Oh no the brazen altar. Three cubits high.

But you see the great thing. The great thing that the sacrificing laid on. Was only half way up. One and a half cubits. And the height of the mercy seat. Because the ark of the covenant. Was one and a half cubits. And then the mercy seat was laid. And it hit with one and a half cubits as well. But this altar.

Golden altar.

In a sense two cubits. [00:13:02] And it would signify to us.

That the Lord after his death is now God and I. To say this now Christ is God and I.

Who gave to his work complete. A spirit brings his glory and I. To those who for him wait. Yes isn't that wonderful. The blessed crown.

And as a man.

Born into the presence of God. A man on high.

Who leads his great work of intercession. And we say to God.

He lives a man before me. And crowns his great work. In dying and crowns his favor. And everlasting love. Yes what a wonderful. Blessed Savior is made our own. What a wonderful Savior is he. And he's got in there. To unite the saints of God. And he appears in the presence of God. To unite.

What do the accused and royal. Appeals that I have done. Yes he knows them all. He's an all the way home Savior. Yes. [00:14:02] All the way home Savior. It doesn't do Hebrews. Chapter 7.

Holy harmless undefiled. Separated from sinners. The one who appears now. In the presence of God for us. Hebrews.

He is able to save completely. Those who approach. By him to God.

He ever lives.

He ever lives.

To make intercession for them. What a blessed and wonderful Savior he is. Maintaining and sustaining us. In the very presence of God. His great work of intercession. And surely a classic. We would see in John 17. When he comes to the Father. And then after.

Seeking that he might be glorified with the Father. And the glory of the child. And quickly he's born of our Lord. He says I pray not that thou should escape them out of the world. Out of the world.

I pray with my feet. [00:15:02] Keep them.

Out of the evil.

Keep them out of the evil. Not keep them from evil. Oh yes.

Evil will come.

But they might be kept out of it. Subtle difference there dear beloved. Meditation on that. Enjoy it.

Precious wonderful Savior. That we are interceding for. And so.

You shall make upon it. The body of gold round about. However of course all of these. Things in the tabernacle. It wasn't a stable scene. It was moving through. Moving through the testimony. And this.

This art of course. When they came to pitch and move on. And it was time to move on. And so.

That art.

That altar.

Shows you that.

The blessed heavenly man. [00:16:02] This one who was here. Was a heavenly man. First man of the earth. The second man.

Out of heaven.

Out of heaven.

Completely different character. Of manhood.

A man out of heaven. A man out of heaven. That blessed order of manhood. That our precious Savior. He could hunger and thirst. He could be weary with the journey. He could eat food.

He could weep.

He could weep in various ways. This precious Savior he was. He felt these things. Yes he was truly a man. But it was a special order of manhood. A man out of heaven. That covering was put over it. And then over it.

The covering of baptism. He was not very attractive. He doubted I.

There is no reason him. That we should deny him. And also of course the badger. [00:17:02] You know the badger's skin. It's completely impervious. To soil.

To money.

You know it can go through mud and everything. And the mud just goes off. Never sticks.

Never attaches to.

And our blessed Lord went through his goddess. Filled the sea.

Oh what a precious Savior isn't he. What a wonderful Savior he is. He went through.

And so it was carried through. The sons of Korah.

Had to carry it.

And he of course.

Had to wear it.

They weren't given a hat. To do so.

They had to bear it. Upon their shoulders. Dear saints of God. Are we standing on the face of the sea? Are we standing on the face of the sea? The faith once delivered to the saints. These blessed truths. That were uncovered for us. 150 or more years ago. Are we standing for these blessed truths. [00:18:02] The truths of scripture. Yes. I just said on Friday to a Greek Orthodox man. He was saying.

Oh you don't follow the traditions of the fathers. And the saints.

And all that's gone on. I said no we go right back. To Acts chapter 2.

That's where we start. Dear saints of God. Are we there in this section of the day. Where we are found. Yes there's much to distract us. Many say give it up. Give it up.

Let's swim into the crowd. No no let us be found here faithful to him. In his last and closing days. And. It was placed in a very blessed position. Before the veil.

And this was there. There was the veil between it. And now of course.

In the Hebrews we read that that veil is run away. The holy place.

And the Holy of Holies is one. And there's no difference there now. And the censer has gone right in. [00:19:02] And I've seen in Hebrews now. On the nurses seat there. That's a blessed place indeed. Where it's all one now.

And. But every morning Aaron. It seems to say Aaron himself. Though we read in Deuteronomy. Chapter 33.

About Levi.

Saying they.

They shall put incense before my mouth. So. I do feel that.

Although primarily the bearing of this passage is. Speaking uniquely of the Lord. Obviously we can get help. From Deuteronomy 33. That we in this day and dispensation. Can come in.

In this service of intercession. And that is why I read. That verse in Revelation. But to encourage us. We might indeed.

The incense.

The odors.

The praises.

Which is the prayer of saints. We might be on this line of intercession today. And so.

[00:20:01] It was associated.

Morning and evening. When he dressed the lambs. You see it's not.

Really divorced.

From the witness of the blessed spirit of God. Let us not be haphazard. About our intercession. No it must be associated. With the blessed testimony. Of the spirit today. Who takes of the things of Christ. Shows them to us.

And he's in this world. Convincing men of righteousness. And judgment.

Convincing men of sin. Righteousness and of judgment. Let us be associated. In our intercession. With that line of testimony today. Dearly beloved.

Let us be associated. With the blessed spirit's testimony today. Hear it by the ear. Let him hear what the spirit says. Unto the attendants. And. So there we were.

Then it says in verse nine. You shall offer up. [00:21:02] No strange incense thereof. Knowing not to have any. Strange concoctions. No strange notions of ourselves. Ideas that we read from the things of men. Let our prayers be. And. The preciousness of Christ. The Christ of the nation. His glory before us. And. I was very encouraged. On the last Wednesday evening. In a local Bible reading. When we were reading John 14. And. Where our Lord says. He shall ask what ye will. He asks according to my name. He shall ask what ye will. And I will grant it unto you. And I came to the conclusion. You see that.

That's what.

The prime desire and prayer would be. That the Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified. And that the Father will be glorified in the Son. There might be.

And there should be glory for God. If we ask for a new motor car. [00:22:02] Or a better job.

Though that's not the great thought. Let us have before us. God's interest.

The Father's interest. The Lord's interest. And that's why.

I read.

In the Colossians of Epictetus. Epictetus.

He wasn't praying that the saints might have. Better material conditions. No. His burden.

He was agonizing about it. He was in agony about it. He was laboring fervently. Dear saints of God. I challenge your hearts. I challenge mine.

Am I agonizing?

Yes. Have we got the saints on our hearts? The Lord Jesus Christ as a monist heart. Haven't we?

Yes. We always wonder and marvel at the jewels on the dress there. Don't we?

When we think about it. We marvel at how wonderful it is. [00:23:02] But have we got these things? Listen.

The feelings dear saints of God. When we feel for the saints of God. When we praise them. When we bear them up before God. Is that what's before us? Dear saints of God. It's something for us to be encouraging in these days isn't it? And then of course. I read it in that day. We can intercede on behalf of the unborn sons of men. Think of Abram that great interceder. On behalf of Sodom. Yes. And today.

Paul could write to Timothy. In chapter 2.

It's as I taught.

That first of all prayer. Supplications.

Giving of thanks.

They make for all men everywhere. Kings and rulers.

Those in authority. Yes we can pray on behalf of them as we see them going around. Terrible condition they're in. Oh how it soils us. When we go down to the seaside. And we see the way they're stripped half naked. [00:24:02] And the condition of man today. When you move around the streets of London. And you see them going. And there they are. We know of course.

The face of God.

Oh do we intercede. Do we pray for them. Pray for the sons of men. And indeed.

Well can we give thanks here and there. For kings and rulers and those in authority. Still today there are those in authority. Who indeed are acting righteously. Trying to uphold what is right. Well let us dear.

Saints of God.

At least give thanks where we can do it in some way. We know of course things are fast pacing on. To the end.

Well can we give thanks here and there. Let us continue this work. Of intercession on behalf. Of the undone sons of men. And where we can.

Speak a word for the master. So. It then says.

[00:25:01] No burnt offering.

No oblation.

And you know.

Well there's many thoughts about this. But one thing that did occur to me. When we offer up burnt offerings. We do that.

At the Lord's Supper don't we. First day of the week. The Lord's Supper.

That's when we offer up burnt offerings. So I would suggest dearly beloved. That we shouldn't mix that. With intercession I pray. Let's keep it distinct. I know it's become a tradition. But I always enjoy just. Being on that Lord's morning. Occupied with our blessed Lord. Where before our evil faith. And his.

Awoken all the power of love divine. And we could say to him. Thy death was brought to life. And ours as well.

Now we contemplate. Lord. Lord. And as we contemplate. That wonderful love. And we have brought into the Father's love. [00:26:01] And our hearts rise to him. Father spring source of blessing. Grateful

praise to thee we bring. Oh when we are in that blessed scene. Presenting Christ in all his blessed acceptability. Offering burnt offerings. Well I know intercession is a necessary one. But let us keep things in their place. Dearly beloved.

We have the intercession meeting. We have the prayer meeting. When should we intercede. Let us be there and pray and intercede. Don't let us mix things up. I will of course say that the converse is necessarily true. If we are at a prayer meeting. There's room to pray. There's room to praise. Room to praise.

And I remember one of my first prayer meetings. As a boy of about 14 or 15. Came to prayer meetings. And there was a dear old servant of God. Mr. Macroom.

And he spoke how in the village. Where he'd been brought up in Ayrshire. A dear brother went along to visit this dear old sister. About 90 she was.

Meddling.

And the brother said well. What shall we pray for? [00:27:02] What shall we pray for? And she said.

Nothing left to pray for. Praise.

I'll translate that for your benefit. Mostly praise.

Mostly praise.

She had nothing else to pray for she said. It was praise for the will of the Lord. Led her.

Yet throughout her life. Praise if you wanted praise. So sometimes you know in that prayer meeting. They would rise.

Mace praise.

Mace praise.

However don't let us neglect to pray. Keep them in their realms dear beloved. You weren't to pour. Drink offerings there on. Don't make it an example of our devotion in a way. Our extra devotion though. Just keep the prayer. Pointed and definite. And with that in mind. What you have in mind. The soul you have in mind. The person you have in mind. The saint you have in mind. The apostle was very definite. [00:28:02] If you read through his epistles. Almost every epistle in the first chapter. He says I make mention of you at my prayers. It's an exercise about that doesn't it. Read it through.

It's quite a helpful lesson to read through. And so.

It was made atonement for once. A year.

On that great day of atonement. When God.

Was recognizing that he would go on with his people. For another year.

But of course with us. God goes on with us forever. Right through into eternity. Just briefly at the end of the chapter. It speaks of what.

Constituted this instance. In sense.

Prayers.

Static.

I understand the static from reading. Various bible.

Commentaries.

When I thought of a resident. Resident that came out from the tree. And. When I've spoken to the. Botanists in the Kew Gardens. [00:29:01] And my frequent visits there. Not that I go there. For pleasure.

It's in the days when I have visitors. And I take them there you see. So. On occasion I've spoken to the gardeners. The people there.

They say that these residents of the trees. Are suffering.

You see.

Comes out from the pressure of suffering. And of course we can see. Our blessed Lord.

Who suffered like to him. Yes. Sufferings we all encounter. Or as we meditate on the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ. As a constituent of the. Residents of this country. Service of God.

And then the onyx.

The onyx.

The onyx is a kind of shell you see. It's ground down.

And it brings forth a wonderful odor. But it's not just.

You know lying by a seashore. Not lying by the seashore. Where is it?

Not just lying in 10 feet of water. Or 20 feet of water. [00:30:02] Or 30 feet of water. You don't get it.

In your comfort of your armchair. No you get down into the things of God. Down there into the depths. Right down.

And get to know something of the preciousness of Christ. Yes. Dig it up.

Put it in.

And then the galvanum is a root. A root.

And so we've got to get to a root of things. That which has gone right in. Get into the roots. And they combine with the pure frankincense. The idea is in us not knowing it. It's that appreciation. That the father alone has in his beloved son. There is nothing in Christ that we can only stand apart from. And know that the father has a supreme and unique and wonderful delight in his beloved son.

And you and I dear saint of God can only stand apart and spectate him.

But indeed we can have the sense of it.

As we come and present him before God. [00:31:01] And so this would be the grounding basis of our approach in this way. This line of intercession. And it was compounded together. Salted.

Yes. There must be that which would keep it fresh and pure. Not the stale old rituals that we bring up every day or every time.

No. There must be that freshness there. And pure.

Nothing impure.

Nothing unholy coming in here at all. It was firm and pure and holy. And it was beaten to powder.

Oh yes.

We meditate on the Lord Jesus Christ. Many beat on him.

And gets down into powder. And that indeed cut brings forth the fragrance. And there is to be no popping of it.

And if any who did that would be cut off. So dear saint of God let us be found. Maybe there is not much that we can do. But at least let us be found in this great service today. This wonderful blessing. [00:32:01] Service and intercession. Ever remembering how blessed God is. The one who has gone on high. Gone in.

Appearing there in the presence of God for us. Let us be found.

Taking character and passion from him. In a similar blessed service for him today. Interceding for the unknown sons of men. Interceding for the saints of God. May it be so.

For his name's sake.