

# Exodus 30 - The Tabernacle: Altars; Numbering; The Laver; Anointing Oil

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(A) Instructions for building the Tabernacle (Ex 25:1—31:17)

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(i) Oil (30:22-33)

(ii) Incense (30:34-38)

## Exodus 30

(h) Altar of incense (30:1-10)

1 "Now you shall make an altar as a place for burning incense; you shall make it of acacia wood.

1 "Moreover, you shall make an altar as a place for burning incense; you shall make it of acacia wood.

1 "You are to make an altar for burning incense. You are to make it of acacia wood.

1 And thou shalt make an altar to burn incense upon: of shittim wood shalt thou make it.

2 Its length *shall be* a cubit, and its width a cubit; it shall be square, and its height *shall be* two cubits; its horns *shall be* of one piece with it.

2 Its length *shall be* a cubit, and its width a cubit, it shall be square, and its height *shall be* two cubits; its horns *shall be* of one piece with it.

2 It is to be a square, one cubit long and one cubit wide, and it is to be two cubits high, with its horns of one piece with 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.

- Cubit is roughly 18 inches, so this is roughly 1.5ft square and 3ft high

3 You shall overlay it with pure gold, its top and its sides all around, and its horns; and you shall make a gold molding all around for it.

3 You shall overlay it with pure gold, its top and its sides all around, and its horns; and you shall make a gold molding all around for it.

3 You are to overlay it with pure gold, its top, its sides all around, and its horns, and you are to make a molding of gold all around it.

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.

### **Incense Altar or Golden Altar**

Do not confuse this with the Brazen Altar, this was smaller, inside the Tabernacle structure and made of gold, not brass. This was used to burn incense. It was inside the Holy Place, in front of the veil, intimately connected with the Holy of Holies. To perform this function, a priest would take a hot coal from the Altar of Sacrifice outside the Tabernacle building, bring it into the Holy Place, and place the hot coal upon the Altar of Incense. He would then drop incense on this hot coal, which would cause a cloud of smoke to rise that would penetrate through the veil into the Holy of Holies and be a sweet-smelling savor offering before the Lord.

While the Altar of Incense stood in the Holy Place, its function was for the Holy of Holies.

This is likely why, in Heb 9:3-4, the Altar of Incense was said to be in the Holy of Holies.

However, it was not physically present there, but its ministry or purpose was for the Holy of Holies, not for the Holy Place [Fruchtenbaum].

The significance of the Altar of Incense is that it symbolizes the prayers of the saints. Just as the smoke went into the presence of God, even so the prayers of the saints go into the presence of God. This is taught in the OT (Ps 141:2), and in the NT (Rev 5:8; 8:3-4).

It is interesting that it was not mentioned when we went through the furniture, but instead it is here after the description of the priesthood. This structure is not by accident, you cannot have a Golden Altar for Incense until there is someone consecrated to burn incense. So the logical spiritual order is to have a priest first, because he needs to take a coal from the brazen altar inside to start this altar.

4 You shall also make two gold rings for it under its molding; you shall make *them* on its two sides—on opposite sides—and they shall be holders for poles with which to carry it.

4 You shall make two gold rings for it under its molding; you shall make *them* on its two side walls—on opposite sides—and they shall be holders for poles with which to carry it.

4 "You are to make two gold rings for it under its molding. You are to make them on its two opposite sides, and they are to be holders for poles by which to carry it.

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 you shall make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold.

5 You shall make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold.

5 You are to make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold.

5 And thou shalt make the staves of shittim wood, and overlay them with gold.

6 You shall put this altar in front of the veil that is near the ark of the testimony, in front of the atoning cover that is over *the ark of the testimony*, where I will meet with you.

6 You shall put this altar in front of the veil that is near the ark of the testimony, in front of the mercy seat that is over *the ark of the testimony*, where I will meet with you.

6 You are to put the altar in front of the curtain that is over the Ark of the Testimony, in front of the Mercy Seat that is over the Testimony where I'll meet with you.

6 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.

7 Aaron shall burn fragrant incense on it; he shall burn it every morning when he trims the lamps.

7 Aaron shall burn fragrant incense on it; he shall burn it every morning when he trims the lamps.

7 Aaron is to offer fragrant incense on it. Every morning when he trims the lamps he is to offer it,

7 And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it.

8 And when Aaron sets up the lamps at twilight, he shall burn incense. *There shall be* perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations.

8 When Aaron trims the lamps at twilight, he shall burn incense. *There shall be* perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations.

8 and when Aaron sets up the lamps at twilight, he is to offer it as a continual incense offering in the LORD's presence throughout your generations.

8 And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations.

9 You shall not offer any strange incense on this altar, or burnt offering, or meal offering; and you shall not pour out a drink offering on it.

9 You shall not offer any strange incense on this altar, or burnt offering or meal offering; and you shall not pour out a drink offering on it.

9 You are not to offer strange incense, a burnt offering, or a grain offering on it, nor are you to pour out a libation on it.

9 Ye shall offer no strange incense thereon, nor burnt sacrifice, nor meat offering; neither shall ye pour drink offering thereon.

10 However, Aaron shall make atonement on its horns once a year; he shall make atonement on it with the blood of the sin offering of atonement once a year throughout your generations. It is most holy to the LORD."

10 Aaron shall make atonement on its horns once a year; he shall make atonement on it with the blood of the sin offering of atonement once a year throughout your generations. It is most holy to the LORD."

10 Each year Aaron is to make atonement on its horns with the blood of the sin offering of atonement. He is to make atonement on it each year throughout your generations. It is most holy to the LORD."

10 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.

- Num 16 - Korah tries to repudiate the Aaronic priesthood. Moses interposes (Jude 11)

- Lev 16:12-13; Num 16:46. Fire from Brazen Altar, in that way these 2 altars are connected (Cf Is 6:7; Lev 1-8)

- Fire is symbolic of God's judgement

- The spiritual symbolism of the Golden Altar is praise; Heb 2:12; 13:15 (and also intercession)

— While the Brazen altar speaks of Christ's work on the cross, the Golden altar speaks of Christ's work today, making intercession for us

(i) Half shekel sanctuary tax to be paid annually by every adult male (30:11-16)

**11** The LORD also spoke to Moses, saying,

**11** The LORD also spoke to Moses, saying,

**11** The LORD told Moses,

**11** And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

12 "When you take a census of the sons of Israel to count them, then each one *of them* shall give a ransom for himself to the LORD, when you count them, so that there will be no plague among them when you count them.

12 "When you take a census of the sons of Israel to number them, then each one of them shall give a ransom for himself to the LORD, when you number them, so that there will be no plague among them when you number them.

12 "When you take a census of the Israelites to register them, each is to give a ransom for himself to the LORD when they're registered so there won't be a plague among them when they're registered.

12 When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the LORD, when thou numberest them; that there be no plague among them, when thou numberest them.

13 This *is what* everyone who is counted shall give: half a shekel according to the **shekel of the sanctuary** (the shekel is twenty gerahs), half a shekel as a contribution to the LORD.

13 This is what everyone who is numbered shall give: half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary (the shekel is twenty gerahs), half a shekel as a contribution to the LORD.

13 This is what everyone who is registered is to give: half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary (the shekel weighs 20 gerahs), half a shekel as a contribution to the LORD.

13 This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary: (a shekel is twenty gerahs:) an half shekel shall be the offering of the LORD.

- "...shekel of the sanctuary" - this later became known as the "temple tax"

— Each male from 20-years-old and older had to pay half a shekel, which was used to support the Sanctuary. It was mandatory whether the person was rich or poor. This was considered an offering to God.

— It was a special coin minted specifically for paying the temple tax.

- The significance of the Atonement Money is the principle that God's work must be supported by God's people. God's work at this time was the Tabernacle. Gentiles were not obligated to pay this half-shekel, so it was God's people (Israel) supporting God's work (the Tabernacle).

— In the same way today, God's work is being done through the Church, so believers are obligated to support the Church. This also includes missionary endeavors and other ministries where God is working.

14 Everyone who is counted, from twenty years old and over, shall give the contribution to the LORD.

14 Everyone who is numbered, from twenty years old and over, shall give the contribution to the LORD.

14 All who are registered, 20 years of age and older, are to give a contribution to the LORD.

14 Every one that passeth among them that are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering unto the LORD.

15 The rich shall not pay more, and the poor shall not pay less, than the half shekel, when you give the contribution to the LORD to make atonement for yourselves.

15 The rich shall not pay more and the poor shall not pay less than the half shekel, when you give the contribution to the LORD to make atonement for yourselves.

15 The rich person is not to give more, nor is the poor person to give less than the half shekel, when you give a contribution to the LORD to make atonement for yourselves.

15 The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when they give an offering unto the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls.

- We can't buy your redemption...yet, there is a price (Is 55:1; 1 Peter 1:18)

- God is teaching that we are a ransomed people, same amount for rich and poor alike

- It is silver, which is melted down to make the sockets which hold the Tabernacle

- Silver and blood are equivalent in the Scripture (Ex 12; 13; 30)

- Our salvation rests on Jesus' blood. Exodus is the Book of Redemption

Numbering applies when one owns something. Thus, numbering is a privilege of ownership! When David numbers it is for himself, thus the judgment (1 Chr 21:1-4,7-8).

Here Moses is instructed to number, for the Lord's sake (Is 40:26; Ps 147:4; Is 65:12; Prov 16:4; Dan 5:26). The whole idea of ransom is that we are appropriated unto God.

16 And you shall take the atonement money from the sons of Israel and give it for the service of the tent of meeting, so that it may be a memorial for the sons of Israel before the LORD, to make atonement for yourselves."

16 You shall take the atonement money from the sons of Israel and shall give it for the service of the tent of meeting, that it may be a memorial for the sons of Israel before the LORD, to make atonement for yourselves."

16 You are to take the atonement money from the Israelis and give it for the service of the Tent of Meeting, and it is to be a memorial for the Israelis in the LORD's presence to make atonement for yourselves."

16 And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls.

(j) Bronze basin for washing (30:17-21)

17 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,  
17 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying,  
17 The LORD told Moses,  
17 And the LORD spoke unto Moses, saying,

18 "You shall also make a basin of bronze, with its base of bronze, for washing; and you shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it.

18 "You shall also make a laver of bronze, with its base of bronze, for washing; and you shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it.

18 "You are to make a bronze basin with a bronze base for washing. You are to place it between the Tent of Meeting and the altar, put water in it,

18 Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and his foot also of brass, to wash withal: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein.

19 Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet from it;

19 Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet from it;

19 and Aaron and his sons are to wash their hands and their feet from it.

19 For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat:

20 when they enter the tent of meeting, they shall wash with water, so that they do not die; or when they approach the altar to minister, by offering up in smoke a fire *sacrifice* to the LORD.

20 when they enter the tent of meeting, they shall wash with water, so that they will not die; or when they approach the altar to minister, by offering up in smoke a fire *sacrifice* to the LORD.

20 When they enter the Tent of Meeting or when they approach the altar to minister to make an offering by fire to the LORD, they are to wash with water so they don't die.

20 When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offering made by fire unto the LORD:

21 So they shall wash their hands and their feet, so that they do not die; and it shall be a permanent statute for them, for Aaron and his descendants throughout their generations."

21 So they shall wash their hands and their feet, so that they will not die; and it shall be a perpetual statute for them, for Aaron and his descendants throughout their generations."

21 They are to wash their hands and their feet so that they don't die, and it is to be for them a perpetual ordinance for Aaron and his seed from generation to generation."

21 So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not: and it shall be a statute for ever to them, even to him and to his seed throughout their generations.

### **The Laver**

The Laver, like the Altar of Sacrifice, was outside the Tabernacle in the courtyard, between the tent of meeting and the altar.

The Laver emphasized the concept of sanctification. The Laver was used for washing, as the priest had to wash before he functioned at the Altar of Sacrifice. He also had to wash before he performed any function in either the Holy Place or the Holy of Holies.

The significance of the Laver is that:

1. It symbolized the Holy Spirit, as water sometimes does (John 7:37-39)
2. It symbolized the believer's cleansing through the Word of God (John 15:3; 17:17; Eph 5:26). That is why the Word functions like a mirror, showing our shortcomings (James 1:22-25).

(k) Recipes for creating oil and incense to be used in Tabernacle services  
(30:22-38)

(i) Oil (30:22-33)

**22** Moreover, the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

**22** Moreover, the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

**22** The LORD told Moses,

**22** Moreover the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

23 "Take also for yourself the finest of spices: of liquid myrrh five hundred *shekels*, and of fragrant cinnamon half as much, 250, and of fragrant cane 250,

23 "Take also for yourself the finest of spices: of flowing myrrh five hundred *shekels*, and of fragrant cinnamon half as much, two hundred and fifty, and of fragrant cane two hundred and fifty,

23 "You are to take for yourself the finest spices: 500 shekels by weight of liquid myrrh, half as much fragrant cinnamon (250 shekels), 250 shekels of fragrant reeds,

23 Take thou also unto thee principal spices, of pure myrrh five hundred shekels, and of sweet cinnamon half so much, even two hundred and fifty shekels, and of sweet calamus two hundred and fifty shekels,

24 and of cassia 500, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and of olive oil a hin.

24 and of cassia five hundred, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and of olive oil a hin.

24 500 shekels of cassia—all according to the shekel of the sanctuary—and a hin of olive oil.

24 And of cassia five hundred shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary, and of oil olive an hin:

25 You shall make from these a **holy anointing oil**, a fragrant mixture of ointments, the work of a perfumer; it shall be a holy anointing oil.

25 You shall make of these a holy anointing oil, a perfume mixture, the work of a perfumer; it shall be a holy anointing oil.

25 You are to make them into a holy anointing oil, a perfume mixture made by a perfumer. It is to be a holy anointing oil.

25 And thou shalt make it an oil of holy ointment, an ointment compound after the art of the apothecary: it shall be an holy anointing oil.

- "...holy anointing oil" - this was the means by which a priest would be anointed to his office. The oil would sanctify him and set him apart.

— The Messianic significance is that Jesus was anointed by the Holy Spirit. Oil is always a symbol of the Holy Spirit.

— This anointing of Jesus by the Holy Spirit was prophesied in Is 61:1; its fulfillment is recorded in Acts 10:38.

26 And you shall anoint the tent of meeting with it, and the ark of the testimony,

26 With it you shall anoint the tent of meeting and the ark of the testimony,

26 You are to use it to anoint the Tent of Meeting, the Ark of the Testimony,

26 And thou shalt anoint the tabernacle of the congregation therewith, and the ark of the testimony,

27 and the table and all its utensils, and the lampstand and its utensils, and the altar of incense,

27 and the table and all its utensils, and the lampstand and its utensils, and the altar of incense,

27 the table and all its utensils, the lamp stand and its utensils, the altar of incense,

27 And the table and all his vessels, and the candlestick and his vessels, and the altar of incense,

28 and the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and the basin and its stand.

28 and the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and the laver and its stand.

28 the altar for burnt offerings and all its utensils, and the basin and its base.

28 And the altar of burnt offering with all his vessels, and the laver and his foot.

29 You shall also consecrate them, so that they may be most holy; whatever touches them shall be holy.

29 You shall also consecrate them, that they may be most holy; whatever touches them shall be holy.

29 You are to consecrate them and they are to be most holy. Whatever touches them is to be holy.

29 And thou shalt sanctify them, that they may be most holy: whatsoever toucheth them shall be holy.

30 And you shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, so that they may serve as priests to Me.

30 You shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may minister as priests to Me.

30 You are to anoint Aaron and his sons, and you are to consecrate them to serve as my priests.

30 And thou shalt anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office.

31 Furthermore, you shall speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'This shall be a holy anointing oil to Me throughout your generations.

31 You shall speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'This shall be a holy anointing oil to Me throughout your generations.

31 You are to address the Israelis and tell them, 'This is to be holy anointing oil for me from generation to generation.

**31** And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, This shall be an holy anointing oil unto me throughout your generations.

32 It shall not be poured on anyone's body, nor shall you make *any* like it in the same proportions; it is holy, *and* it shall be holy to you.

32 It shall not be poured on anyone's body, nor shall you make *any* like it in the same proportions; it is holy, *and* it shall be holy to you.

32 It is not to be poured out on a person's body, nor are you to make anything like it with similar formulations. It is holy, and it is to be holy to you.

32 Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured, neither shall ye make any other like it, after the composition of it: it is holy, and it shall be holy unto you.

33 Whoever mixes *any* like it or whoever puts any of it on a layman shall be cut off from his people."

33 Whoever shall mix *any* like it or whoever puts any of it on a layman shall be cut off from his people."

33 Anyone who mixes anything like it or who puts any of it on an unqualified person is to be cut off from his people."

33 Whosoever compoundeth any like it, or whosoever putteth any of it upon a stranger, shall even be cut off from his people.

(ii) Incense (30:34-38)

**34** Then the LORD said to Moses, "Take for yourself **spices**—stacte, onycha, and galbanum, spices and pure frankincense; there shall be an equal part of each.

**34** Then the LORD said to Moses, "Take for yourself spices, stacte and onycha and galbanum, spices with pure frankincense; there shall be an equal part of each.

**34** The LORD told Moses, "Take for yourself spices: stacte, onycha, galbanum, and spices with pure frankincense, all in equal amounts.

**34** And the LORD said unto Moses, Take unto thee sweetspices, stacte, and onycha, and galbanum; these sweet spices with pure frankincense: of each shall there be a like weight:

- "...spices" - in Hebrew "smell sweetly" (Ps 45:7-8)

— This is the Incense that was sprinkled on the hot coal on the Altar of Incense, causing the sweet-smelling savor to enter the Holy of Holies

— This Incense symbolized the believer's conduct. A believer's righteous conduct is a sweet-smelling savor before the Lord (2 Cor 2:14,16).

This was very expensive, precious oil with four ingredients:

1. Myrrh - of the dwarf tree of Terebirth family (found in Arabia); We are familiar with it due to the gift of the wise men.
  - Also, from Revelation and the church of Smyrna (which is Greek for Myrrh) which speaks of death, fragrance by crushing
  - It is made from gum which exudes from a tree either spontaneously or by incisions
  - It is mentioned 14x (8x in Song of Solomon, where it speaks of love, e.g., Song 1:13; 5:13), and also His anointing in John 19:39
  - Myrrh is not presented as a gift in the Millennium, as the myrrh is behind us, death is past
2. Cinnamon - comes from Hebrew root *kinna* meaning "jealousy" and *min* meaning "appearance or form of"
  - One could translate cinnamon to be "the appearance or form of jealousy" (John 2:17; Song 4:14; 8:6)

- Cinnamon comes from the bark of the evergreen tree of the Laural family, typically from Ceylon
- 3. Sweet Calamus - "Calamus" = reed or cane, Hebrew means "stand upright"
  - Also translated Spikenard. It get its fragrance from crushing, and it grows in miry soil. Could look at it as a bruised reed (Is 42:3)
- 4. Cassice - means "stoop or bow down" - speaks of worship. King of Tyre trafficked in Cassice (Ezek 27:19; Ezek 280. Satan = King of Tyre.

35 You shall make incense from it *all*, a skillful mixture, the work of a perfumer, salted, pure, *and* holy.

35 With it you shall make incense, a perfume, the work of a perfumer, salted, pure, *and* holy.

35 You are to make it into a fragrant incense, expertly blended, pure, and holy.

35 And thou shalt make it a perfume, a confection after the art of the apothecary, tempered together, pure and holy:

36 And you shall crush some of it very fine, and put part of it in front of the testimony in the tent of meeting where I will meet with you; it shall be most holy to you.

36 You shall beat some of it very fine, and put part of it before the testimony in the tent of meeting where I will meet with you; it shall be most holy to you.

36 You are to grind some of it fine, and put some before the Testimony in the Tent of Meeting where I will meet with you. It is to be most holy to you.

36 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 the incense which you shall make, you shall not make in the same proportions for yourselves; it shall be holy to you for the LORD.

37 The incense which you shall make, you shall not make in the same proportions for yourselves; it shall be holy to you for the LORD.

37 You are not to make the incense that you make in this formulation for your own use. It is to be holy to the LORD for you.

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 Whoever makes *any* like it, to use as perfume, shall be cut off from his people."

38 Whoever shall make *any* like it, to use as perfume, shall be cut off from his people."

38 Anyone who makes anything like it to use it as perfume is to be cut off from his people."

38 Whosoever shall make like unto that, to smell thereto, shall even be cut off from his people.