

1 Chronicles 6:49

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But Aaron and his sons offered upon the altar of the burnt offering, and on the altar of incense, and were appointed for all the work of the place most holy, and to make an atonement for Israel, according to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded.

Analysis

But Aaron and his sons (וְאַהֲרֹן וּבָנָיו)—this emphatic contrast distinguishes the exclusive priestly duties from broader Levitical service. Only Aaron's descendants could **offered upon the altar of the burnt offering** (עֹלָה olah, the sacrifice wholly consumed by fire) and **the altar of incense** (קֶטֶרֶת qetoret, the fragrant smoke rising before the Holy of Holies). These two altars represented complete dedication to God (burnt offering) and intercessory prayer (incense).

Appointed for all the work of the place most holy (קֹדֶשׁ הַקֳּדָשִׁים qodesh haqodashim)—only Aaron's line could enter the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur. The phrase **to make an atonement** (לְכַפֵּר lechapper) uses the Hebrew root meaning 'to cover'—priestly ministry covered Israel's sin through blood sacrifice, prefiguring Christ who 'covers' definitively through His own blood (Romans 3:25; Hebrews 9:11-14).

According to all that Moses the servant of God had commanded—this appeal to Mosaic authority validates post-exilic priestly practice against Samaritan competing claims. The Aaronic priesthood derives authority not from human appointment but from divine command through Moses (Exodus 28-29; Leviticus

8-9). Christ's priesthood similarly rests on God's oath, not Levitical law (Hebrews 7:20-22).

Historical Context

Written after exile when the restored community faced questions about proper worship procedures, this verse reasserts Aaronic exclusivity in sacrificial duties. During the Second Temple period (515 BC-AD 70), Zadokite priests (descended from Aaron through Zadok) maintained these functions until Christ's death made the temple veil-tearing (Matthew 27:51) obsolete the old system. The Chronicler emphasizes Mosaic authorization to counter syncretistic worship proposals from neighboring peoples.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How do the two altars (burnt offering and incense) picture the twin aspects of Christian life: complete consecration and constant prayer?
2. Since Christ fulfilled Aaron's priestly role definitively, how does Hebrews 10:19-22's invitation to boldly approach God transform your prayer life?

Interlinear Text

וְאַהֲרֹן	וּבְנֵי יוֹ	מִקְטִיר יָם	עַל	מִזְבֵּחַ	הַעֹלָה
But Aaron	and his sons	offered	H5921	and on the altar	of the burnt offering
H175	H1121	H6999		H4196	H5930
וְעַל	מִזְבֵּחַ	הַקֶּטֶר	לְכָל	מְלָאכָה	
H5921	and on the altar	of incense	H3605	and were appointed for all the work	
	H4196	H7004		H4399	
יָם הַקֹּדֶשׁ	יָם הַקֹּדֶשׁ	וּלְכַפֵּר	עַל	יִשְׂרָאֵל	כָּל
holy	holy	and to make an atonement	H5921	for Israel	H3605
H6944	H6944	H3722		H3478	
אָשָׁר	צִוָּה	מֹשֶׁה	עַבְדְּ	הָאֱלֹהִים:	
H834	had commanded	according to all that Moses	the servant	of God	
	H6680	H4872	H5650	H430	

Additional Cross-References

Leviticus 4:20 (Sacrifice): And he shall do with the bullock as he did with the bullock for a sin offering, so shall he do with this: and the priest shall make an atonement for them, and it shall be forgiven them.

Job 33:24 (Parallel theme): Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom.

Exodus 29:33 (Holy): And they shall eat those things wherewith the atonement was made, to consecrate and to sanctify them: but a stranger shall not eat thereof, because they are holy.