

Exodus 35:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he hath filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship;

Analysis

Spices (הַבְּשָׁמִים, ha-besamim) for anointing oil and incense represent the fragrant ascending worship and consecration of priests and furnishings. The oil (שֶׁמֶן, shemen) for light maintained the menorah's continual flame—symbolic of the Spirit's illumination. These aromatic and luminous materials demonstrate that worship engages the senses (sight, smell) while pointing beyond physical perception to spiritual realities. The gifts enable both setting apart (anointing) and sustained presence (light, incense).

Historical Context

The anointing oil's recipe (30:23-25) required myrrh, cinnamon, calamus, cassia, and olive oil—expensive imports demonstrating international trade even in wilderness settings. Incense ingredients (30:34-35) included stacte, onycha, galbanum, and frankincense—equally costly, requiring skilled compounding.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How do spices and oil for anointing and incense symbolize different aspects of worship (consecration, prayer, illumination)?
2. What does the requirement for specific, costly fragrances teach about approaching God according to His prescribed pattern?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּמַּל א	אֶת ו	ר וְח	בְּחָכְמָה ה	אֱלֹהֵי ים
And he hath filled	H853	him with the spirit	of God	in wisdom
H4390		H7307	H430	H2451
בְּתִבּוּן ה	וּבִדְעַת	וּבְכָל	מְלָאכָה:	
in understanding	and in knowledge	H3605	and in all manner of workmanship	
H8394	H1847		H4399	

Additional Cross-References

James 1:17 (Parallel theme): Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

2 Chronicles 2:14 (Parallel theme): The son of a woman of the daughters of Dan, and his father was a man of Tyre, skilful to work in gold, and in silver, in brass, in iron, in stone, and in timber, in purple, in blue, and in fine linen, and in crimson; also to grave any manner of graving, and to find out every device which shall be put to him, with thy cunning men, and with the cunning men of my lord David thy father.