

Exodus 37:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he made the holy anointing oil, and the pure incense of sweet spices, according to the work of the apothecary.

Analysis

The holy anointing oil (שֶׁמֶן הַמִּשְׁחָה קָדֵשׁ, shemen ha-mishchah kodesh) and pure incense (קְטוּרַת הַסְמִים טָהוֹר, ketoret ha-sammim tahor) prepared 'after the art of the apothecary' (מְעַשֵּׂה רְקִמָּה, ma'aseh rokeach—'perfumer's work') demonstrate that approaching God requires careful, skilled preparation. The anointing oil set apart priests and furnishings as holy unto the LORD—the same root as 'Messiah/Christ' (מֶשֶׁיחַ, mashiach, 'anointed one'). The pure incense symbolized prayers ascending to God. Both required specific recipes forbidden for common use, teaching that worship demands God's prescribed pattern, not human innovation.

Historical Context

The anointing oil's recipe (Exodus 30:23-25) included myrrh, cinnamon, calamus, cassia, and olive oil—expensive ingredients demonstrating the value of consecration. The incense recipe (30:34-35) included stacte, onycha, galbanum, and frankincense, equally costly. Both were compounded by skilled perfumers, not mixed casually.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What does the requirement for specific, skillfully prepared recipes teach about worship following God's pattern versus human innovation?
2. How do anointing oil and pure incense illustrate the necessity of proper means (consecration and prayer) in approaching God?

Interlinear Text

וְיָשַׁבְתָּה	בְּמִשְׁכָּנָה	קָדְשָׁה	בְּתַתְּ	קָדְשָׁה
And he made	anointing	the holy	incense	
H853	H4888	H6944	H7004	
oil				
H8081				
יְמִינָה וְרָאשָׁה	מְשֻׁבֵּחַ	רְקִמָּה		
of sweet spices	and the pure	according to the work	of the apothecary	
H5561	H2889	H4639	H7543	

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