

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 קֹדֶשׁ, shemen ha-mishchah kodesh) and pure incense (קֶטֶרֶת הַסַּמִּימִים טָהוֹר, ketoret ha-sammim tahor) prepared 'after the art of the apothecary' (מַעֲשֵׂה רֹקֵחַ, 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' (מָשִׁיחַ, 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

Psalms 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

וַיַּעַשׂ	אֶת	שֶׁן מִן	הַמִּשְׁחָה	קֹדֶשׁ	וְאֶת	קֶטֶר רֵת
And he made	H853	oil	anointing	the holy	H853	incense
H6213		H8081	H4888	H6944		H7004
הַסַּמִּים יִם	טָהוֹר	מַעֲשֵׂה הַ	רֵקֶת:			
of sweet spices	and the pure	according to the work	of the apothecary			
H5561	H2889	H4639	H7543			

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