

Exodus 40:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he burnt sweet incense thereon; as the LORD commanded Moses.

Analysis

'He burnt sweet incense thereon' (וַיִּקְטֹרַע עָלָיו קֶטֶרֶת סַמִּים, vayaqter alav qetoret samim, caused fragrant incense to ascend)—the Hebrew קָטַר (qatar, to burn incense/cause smoke to ascend) emphasizes upward motion toward God. The 'sweet incense' (קֶטֶרֶת סַמִּים, qetoret samim, fragrant spice incense) followed a specific recipe (Exodus 30:34-38), teaching that prayer must be according to God's will, not selfish desire (1 John 5:14). The 6th 'as the LORD commanded Moses' underscores obedience. Christ's intercession, perfectly aligned with the Father's will (John 17), is our fragrant offering.

Historical Context

The sweet incense's unique recipe (Exodus 30:34-38) included stacte, onycha, galbanum, and frankincense, tempered together—replication for common use carried the death penalty. The twice-daily burning (morning and evening) established prayer rhythms, teaching consistent devotion rather than sporadic spirituality.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does the incense's prescribed recipe teach that acceptable prayer aligns with God's revealed will?
2. What does Christ's intercession perfectly conforming to the Father's will teach about praying in Jesus' name?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּקְטֹר	עֲלֵי יוֹ	קֶטֶר רֵת	סֶמֶךְ יִם	בְּאֶשׁ ר	צִוָּה
And he burnt	H5921	incense	sweet	H834	commanded
H6999		H7004	H5561		H6680
יְהוָה ה	מֹשֶׁה:	אֶת			
thereon as the LORD	H853	Moses			
H3068		H4872			

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 30:7 (Parallel theme): And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it.
