

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' (וַיָּאֹתֶר עַלְיוֹ קָטְרָת סָמִים) 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' (קָטְרָת סָמִים, 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

וְאֵת	רָאשָׁה	עַל	וְיִקְרָא	רְאֵשָׁת	קְרָבָה	סְמִימָה	קְרָבָה	צִוְּתָה
And he burnt	H5921	incense	H7004	sweet	H834	commanded	H6680	
H6999			H3068	H5561				

וְיִהְיוּ	אַתֶּם	מְשֻׁהָה
thereon as the LORD	H853	Moses

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.

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