

Numbers 7:74

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

One golden spoon of ten shekels, full of incense:

Analysis

One golden spoon of ten shekels, full of incense (קָפֶעֶשֶׁרֶת זָהָב מְלָאָה קְטוּרָת, kaf asarah zahav mele'ah qetoret)—The golden spoon or ladle weighs precisely ten shekels, the number of divine order and completeness. Filled with qetoret (fragrant incense), it prefigures the prayers of the saints rising before God's throne (Revelation 5:8, 8:3-4).

Gold represents deity and divine glory, while incense symbolizes prayer and worship. The specific weight—ten shekels—suggests measured, deliberate devotion, not spontaneous emotionalism. Every tribe brings the same amount, teaching that acceptable worship follows divine prescription, not human preference. The incense cannot be offered on unauthorized fire (Leviticus 10:1-2) or with altered ingredients (Exodus 30:34-38).

Historical Context

The incense formula was divinely prescribed in Exodus 30:34-38 and could not be replicated for personal use on pain of excommunication. This exclusivity emphasized the holiness of approaching God and the seriousness of worship.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does the fixed weight and recipe of the incense challenge contemporary views that authentic worship must be spontaneous or personalized?
2. What does the connection between incense and prayer (Revelation 5:8) teach about the necessity of Christ's mediation in acceptable worship?
3. Why might God insist on uniformity in the golden spoons when He created such diversity in human personalities and cultures?

Interlinear Text

קְרִבָּה מְלָא הַיּוּ בְ שְׁכָב הַעֲשָׂרֶת וְאֶת הַמְּלָאָה

spoon	One	of ten	golden	shekels full	of incense
H3709	H259	H6235	H2091	H4392	H7004

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