

# *The Shores Scrolls*

Connecting the weekend sermon to the rest of your week™

**Series:** Audience with the Almighty

**Message:** Sweet Aroma of Prayer

**Scripture:** Exodus 30:1-10, 22-38; 37:25-29

There is a story in the Bible about a priest named Zachariah whose wife was barren. In the course of his duties, he was chosen for the rare honor of burning incense upon the Altar of Incense in the Holy place of the Jewish Temple. While Zachariah burned the incense before the Lord, the people outside waited and prayed. The practice of prayer and worship was intertwined with the Altar of Incense so tightly that in the book of Revelation, it tells of "golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints." (5:8)

Because of what Christ has done, we as believers today can come without fear or reservation to God's throne of grace in our time of need. Even with that being true, a privilege of grace, I wonder if we treat coming into the holy presence of God a bit too casually. Think about this: the Altar of Incense was located in the Holy Place, mere steps away from the Holy of Holies, where the Ark of the Covenant—the actual Throne of Almighty God was located.

A question of reflection: have we lost the awe, the sense of majesty as we come before the King of all creation?

## **Big Idea**

Through the sacrificial work of Christ, we have become a sweet aroma to God. He has made us into a kingdom and priests to God. Let us then offer Him the sacrifice of praise, the fruit of our lips giving Him thanks!

## **Insight**

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. Rev. 21:3

## Day 1: READ What does it say?

Exodus 30:1-10, 22-38; 37:25-29

You shall make an altar on which to burn incense; you shall make it of acacia wood. <sup>2</sup> A cubit shall be its length, and a cubit its breadth. It shall be square, and two cubits shall be its height. Its horns shall be of one piece with it. <sup>3</sup> You shall overlay it with pure gold, its top and around its sides and its horns. And you shall make a molding of gold around it. <sup>4</sup> And you shall make two golden rings for it. Under its molding on two opposite sides of it you shall make them, and they shall be holders for poles with which to carry it. <sup>5</sup> You shall make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. <sup>6</sup> And you shall put it in front of the veil that is above the ark of the testimony, in front of the mercy seat that is above the testimony, where I will meet with you. <sup>7</sup> And Aaron

shall burn fragrant incense on it. Every morning when he dresses the lamps he shall burn it, <sup>8</sup> and when Aaron sets up the lamps at twilight, he shall burn it, a regular incense offering before the LORD throughout your generations. <sup>9</sup> You shall not offer unauthorized incense on it, or a burnt offering, or a grain offering, and you shall not pour a drink offering on it. <sup>10</sup> Aaron shall make atonement on its horns once a year. With the blood of the sin offering of atonement he shall make atonement for it once in the year throughout your generations. It is most holy to the LORD.”  
Exodus 30:1-10

**Read also Exodus 30:22-38 & 37:25-29**

**Now that you've read the text, write down some observations about it.**

How often was incense to be offered on the altar?

What was used to build the Altar?

What was to be anointed with the Lord's special Oil?

What was the purpose of anointing these items?

According to Ex. 30:36, what was to be done with some of the incense?

Where was the altar to be located within the Tabernacle?

What would happen if someone made an incense similar to the Lord's incense?

## Day 2: REFLECT What does it mean?

1. Reflect on the purpose, role, and function of the Altar of Incense.
2. What is most likely the significance of the incense? (cf. Lev. 16:12-13)
3. Observe and contrast the construction materials used to build the furniture based on location in the Tabernacle. What meaning can we derive from this?
4. Think about the environment established by the smoke generated from the burning of the incense and the flames from the seven lamps hung on the lampstand. Was there a functional purpose to this? What was its role?
5. What special event was to occur only once a year on the Altar of Incense? What was the significance of this event?

## Day 3: RESPOND How does it apply to me?

1. How did God make himself known to you through this passage(s)? What did you learn about Him?
2. What specifically is God asking you to do from this study of Scripture? Is there a promise to claim, a sin to avoid, an example to follow, or a command to obey?
3. How do the truths in this study of Scripture apply to . . .

You personally?

The Church?

The world around you?

## **Day 4: RECORD** your thoughts

Use this space to journal your thoughts about the passage and what God is showing you to change in your life.

## **Day 5: RECALL** the memory verse

And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

Revelation 5:8 ESV

## Life Group discussion questions

1. There are two altars in the Tabernacle, contrast and compare them. There are three main distinctions—can you identify them?
2. According to Rev. 5:8; 8:3-4; Ps. 141:2 and Luke 1:8-10, incense is a symbol of what two things? (Hint: both begin with ‘P’)
3. What heavenly reality did Aaron ministering before the incense altar represent? (cf. Hebrews 8:1-2; 7:25) How so?
4. Think about the three items in the Holy place (lampstand, table of showbread and the incense altar), is there a relationship between them? Why or why not?
5. How does the Altar of Incense speak to the practices of worship and prayer in the life of a modern day believer?

### **How to Use This Resource**

*The Shores Scrolls* is a spiritual formation tool that helps you connect the weekend sermon to the rest of your week. It is designed for individual study, small group interaction, and family conversation around God's word.

### **Publisher**

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### **Mission**

Making disciples of Jesus Christ who go and make disciples

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