

## **GOLDEN CENSER AND THE ACCEPTABLE INCENSE**

**"And he shall take a censer; full of burning coals; from the altar before the LORD, his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil: [that the] cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not" Leviticus 16:12-13**

While this passage is talking about the observances of the temple for the Jewish people in the Old Testament time period, we can see a parallel in this Scripture concerning our relationship with God, and offering an acceptable sacrifice to God.

The altar of incense is a picture of the acceptable sacrifice of Christ, because *He* was the perfect, acceptable sacrifice that pleased God. He was acceptable to God because he was pure, holy, righteous, blameless, without sin, and without spot or wrinkle. Through *Him* we are being made into perfect vessels that are acceptable to God.

The censer here is a picture of a holy vessel, tried and true, tested through fiery furnaces of life, consecrated or dedicated to God. The burning coals are the fires of the Lord—the baptism of fire, and the purification of the Lord through his unquenchable fire. This fire that is “from the altar before the LORD” demonstrates that unless the Lord puts His fire in you after being in His presence, you cannot be a golden vessel that will offer a perfect sacrifice.

The hands full bringing the finely ground incense refers to our service to God. Clean hands and a pure heart must go together. The Lord is demanding holy, pleasing and acceptable service from His priests. Our prayers must be sweet before him and this type of sacrifice and service can only be found within the veil.

The *veil* is the body of Christ, broken so that we may enter in, only to be broken with Him by becoming one with Him in His suffering of the flesh. This is where we die to self and fleshy agendas.

The incense can only burn with the genuine fire from the altar of the Lord. If you place incense into another vessel other than the golden vessel, or do not put it in the hands of the rightful priest, you will die or be struck dead. There can be no mistakes in this realm of operation.

Only the golden censer can enter into the veil (Jesus). We must allow Jesus to take us through fiery trials, and the wilderness experience to perfect us into a golden vessel. Unless our lives have been purged of every dross, impurity and yeast, we cannot be a golden censer. Only golden censers qualify to carry the fire from the altar of the Lord. He can only entrust the glory of his fire with golden vessels. Our prayers, the sacrifice of our lives, and our service to God (or incense) must be tried and tested in the fire of the Lord.

The priest is said to take coals off of the altar of the Lord and place them into a censer, and then carry the censer into the most holy place. After he was within the veil he would take the incense that was in his hand and put it inside the censer. This would create a cloud of incense that would cover the mercy seat. Once this was accomplished, the priest would take the blood and sprinkle it on the mercy seat:

**"And he shall take of the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy seat eastward; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times."** Leviticus 16:14

The Priest could not offer any service that pleased the Lord until he was inside the veil, and no one was allowed inside the veil except for the qualified priest.

We cannot enter into Christ's service without qualification. What was the qualification?

1. Being rightfully called into the priestly office: There can be no fake salvation experience.
2. Going through the wilderness and the fiery trials: We must be tested and tried.
3. Being baptized with fire from the altar of the Lord: We must be purified until we are as gold with no impurities.
4. Being filled and baptized by fire: We need to be infused or burdened by the Lord, engulfed by Him, and consumed by Him.

The cloud of incense rising means that the vessel is golden and the priesthood is right. This is the pleasing aroma that rises to the Lord out of our life being acceptable to God. The cloud here represents our life when placed before the Lord and before his precious blood.

If your life and service was placed before His blood, would it qualify for his mercy or judgement? Remember, the mercy seat is an illustration of God covering our sin through Jesus' blood. In Numbers 16, judgments came upon those who did not walk in the correct priestly order. This implies that judgement can come on us if we are not entering through the blood of Jesus.

A holy and consecrated life is like a smoke of incense that goes before the Lord and spares our life. Then we, as priests, will be purified and refined by fire, and come forth as gold. It is only after going through this process can we enter into service for Christ.

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