



Clanking Chains: God & the Israelites Enter into a Contract, Ex 19:5-8; Typology of the Brass Altar; The Recipe for Incense: Stacte

29. Under the spiritual code of the covenant the emphasis was placed on obedience to God and loyalty to His Word and amounted to a contract:

Exodus 19:5 - "If you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine;

v. 6 - and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel."

v. 7 - So Moses came and called the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which the Lord had commanded him.

v. 8 - And all the people answered together and said, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do!" And Moses brought back the words of the people to the Lord.

30. The rituals surrounding the Tabernacle were designed to communicate through visual aids and typology the theological principles of sin (hamartiology), salvation (soteriology), and the Messiah (Christology).
31. Aaron and his four sons were consecrated into the highest positions of leadership within the Levitical priesthood of Israel. Their duties were to teach and enforce these theological principles. They were to do so by consistent repetition of every stipulation on a day-by-day basis.
32. Deviation from the established standards required by the ordinances of the spiritual code was considered blasphemy instead of compliance, disrespect rather than honor, and heretical rather than orthodox.
33. If 40% of the priesthood's leadership corps is allowed to break the contract with impunity then the authority of the Mosaic Law comes into question. The people would not take it seriously, they would look on it as a flexible or "growing" document, and worst of all they would fail to get the message communicated by inconsistently executed rituals.
34. Therefore, the potential damage done by Nadab and Abihu's nonchalant attitude toward the responsibilities of their office is appalling with regard to their arrogance, dangerous with regard to the potential impact of their false teachings on the congregation, and blasphemous by its disregard for the Word of God.
35. Let's assume for a moment these two men were trying to do the right thing but were completely ignorant of the processes they were to follow and oblivious to the ramifications of doing it in a wrong way.
- (1) They did not get fiery coals from the brass altar, a type for the judgment of sins associated with the sacrificial spiritual death of Christ on the cross. By ignoring these coals other major doctrines were ignored as well:

Thieme, R. B., Jr. *Levitical Offerings*. (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 1973), 12-13; 20-21:

Leviticus 1:3 - If his offering be a burnt sacrifice of the herd, let him offer a male without blemish ...



The Hebrew noun OLAH, meaning “an ascent, a holocaust, a burnt sacrifice,” is taken from the verb ALAH, “to go up in smoke or flame.” Hence, it refers to the gaseous smoke which curled upward after the carcass was consumed by the flames. This “sweet savor” was said to **propitiate** God the Father.

The offering taken from the herd specified “a male without blemish.” Thus it represented the incarnate perfect Person of the Son of God. (p. 13)

... that there was no blemish reminded of the absolute perfection of the humanity of the coming Savior who would be free from both overt and mental attitude sins. Because of the **impeccability** of His humanity, Messiah would be qualified to go to the cross. (p. 20)

The altar shows that everything that was necessary for our salvation was accomplished on the Cross.

The brazen altar—the shadow of the Cross—contained a grate where the priests placed the wood for burnt offerings. Like everything connected with the Levitical rituals, the **wood** had a symbolical meaning: to the Israelite, it **spoke of sins**, and the **burning depicted the judgment of those sins**. (p. 21)

- (2) They also had strange incense, quite possibly a recipe taken from the heathen cultures that surrounded Canaan or even from Egypt.
 - (3) When this unauthorized incense was ignited on the Golden Altar the perfume was not acceptable to God.
36. Before our Lord could assume His ministry of intercessory prayer He was required by the salvation plan of God to complete His work on the cross and, following His ascension, to be glorified and seated at the right hand of the Father.
 37. The principle: intercessory prayer is dependent on the completed work of Christ. Thus the fire must come from the brass altar. Until the cross is recognized, intercessory prayer cannot occur.
 38. Nadab and Abihu not only ignored these issues but were also rebellious in the sense of usurping their father Aaron’s authority as High Priest. Thus, they were in gross violation of a host of very critical procedures designed to teach principles of salvation and the spiritual life.
 39. The ingredients of the incense were as important as the other issues since they portrayed the person and work of the Messiah. Let’s take a look at the typology contained in the official recipe for incense. The proper ingredients include:

- (1) **Stacte**: Heb. נָטַף *nataf*; Gk, στακτή, *staktē*.

The root word gives us clues to its theological significance to Christ and His intercessory prayer.

The verb נָטַף *nataf* (with a short second “a”) is used to describe rain, an outflow of water, or distilled liquids. We find this word used in other passages of Scripture to describe speech:



Job 29:22 - "After my words they did not speak again, and my speech dropped on them."

Job 36:27 - "He draws up the drops of water. They distill rain from the mist."

Song of Solomon 4:11 - "Your lips, my bride, drip honey; honey and milk are under your tongue."

We can see from these uses that the liquid that drops or drips does so spontaneously; it exudes from its source naturally. Those who collected the stacte gum found it naturally and continuously oozing from the plant and then dropping to the ground.

The derivative word stacte, נָטַף *nataf*, means "to drop" or "distill." When we pray we may not be able to properly express our requests to the Father due to lack of vocabulary or knowledge of doctrine. But the Lord knows our desires and thoughts and distills them into a precise presentation to God. Therefore, stacte refers to the free flow of speech from the lips of our Lord in continuous intercessory prayer for His people.

(2) **Onycha:** Heb. שְׁחֵלֶת *shecheleth*; Gk. ὄνυχα, *onucha*.

The word means literally "finger nail" or "nail-like." It refers to shellfish specifically a mollusk of the Red Sea. The word actually refers to a specific part of its shell, the operculum \ō-per' ku-lem\, the horny or shelly plate on the foot of many gastropod mollusks that closes the shell when the animal is retracted. We are reminded of our Lord's response to Pontius Pilate when His Person and integrity were questioned by the chief priests and elders:

Matthew 27:12 - While Jesus was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He made no answer,

v. 13 - Then Pilate said to Him, "Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?"

v. 14 - And Jesus did not answer him with regard to even a single charge, so that the governor was quite amazed.

Our Lord was not intimidated by the interrogators and their false accusations. His focus was on the mission and the empty insults were of no concern to Him thus he opened not His mouth. Ultimately found guilty as a result of two legal systems' gross miscarriages of justice, our Lord was crucified and in doing so became a substitutionary sacrifice for the entire human race.