



Clanking Chains: A Summary of Ingredients in the Divine Incense; The Punishment Administered to Nadab & Abihu; Moses & Aaron

40. We will now summarize what the ingredients of the recipe are intended to communicate:

- (1) **Stacte:** Those who collected the stacte gum found it naturally and continuously oozing from the plant and then dropping to the ground. Therefore, stacte refers to the free flow of speech from the lips of our Lord in continuous intercessory prayer for His people.
- (2) **Onycha:**
 - (1) When **crushed** it is a type for the judgment of our sins in Christ as characterized by Isaiah 53:10 where it reads, “it pleased the Father to crush [דָּכָא] **dakka: to crush and pulverize into dust**] Him putting Him to grief.”
 - (2) When **burned** it is a type for the Intercessory prayers of Christ who as High Priest processes the prayers of the saints at the right hand of the Father.

The Father was propitiated by the crushing, and therefore He is responsive to the intercession.

Therefore, the onycha being **crushed** points to the cross and the **sacrificial spiritual death** of Messiah.

The onycha being **burned** as part of the incense points to the **glorified** Messiah’s **office of intercession**.

- (3) **Galbanum:** The Hebrew word for galbanum is חֶלְבֵנָה **chelbenah**, and is a derivative of חֶלֶב **chelev**, the word for “fat.” This word is often used figuratively to refer to the “best part” of anything.

For the sinner, the “best part” of our Lord’s sacrifice was that part of Him that no one else could give and that was His perfection. Because He was the perfect substitute, He was qualified to take on the bitter, pungent, acrid, and repulsive sins committed by the entire human race. His perfection was His “fat portion.” The gum resin called galbanum was the best that the plant, *Ferula galbaniflua*, had to give.

Because the Lord gave His best part, His perfection, our sin problem is solved, and thus we now have the unique privilege as royal priests of directing our prayers to God the Father in the name of the Son, Jesus Christ, Who serves us as our High Priest and our Intercessor.

- (4) **Frankincense:** When the gum of the *Boswellia carterii* oozes from the bark it first appears amber-colored and has a “nauseous taste.” These are suggestive of the agony our Lord suffered in dying physically and spiritually for our sins or **expiation**.

But after it is removed from the tree the resin produces a white dust on its surface. This is suggestive of the Lord’s physical death and burial or **retroactive positional truth**.



When the resin is burned it produces a bright flame which, when a part of the sacred incense, is a type for the glorified Christ, and indicates **current positional truth**.

41. Now let's pare it down even further with a summary statement for each ingredient:
- (1) **Stacte:** Refers to the free flow of **consistent intercessory prayer** from the lips of the crucified and glorified Messiah.
 - (2) **Onycha:** **Crushed** it refers to the **substitutionary sacrifice** of Messiah on the cross. **Burned** it refers to the Messiah's **office of Intercessor** in ascended glory.
 - (3) **Galbanum:** Comes from the root word for "fat portion" or the best the sacrificial animal had to offer. The best our Lord had to offer was His **perfection**, or **impeccability**, which qualified Him to be our substitutionary sacrifice on the cross.
 - (4) **Frankincense:** In its **natural state** it refers to the work of Christ on the cross or **expiation**. After taken **from the tree** for preparation it speaks of **retroactive positional truth** – the power of the sinful nature is broken. When **burned** as part of the incense it speaks of **current positional truth** – the believer as a royal priest Christ as his High Priest and Intercessor.
 - (5) **Salt:** Indicates that this is an **everlasting contract** that exists among those who have placed their faith in Messiah and who maintain fellowship with the Father. All of these ingredients produced:
 - (6) **Incense:** An aromatic compound which gives forth a **sweet savor to God** in burning. That God was pleased with its fragrance indicated that all had been done in accordance with His commands. Those who prepared it had done so in accordance with the divine recipe. The priesthood had taught the importance of the doctrines contained in its various ingredients. And its presentation to the Father was in accordance with the process and procedure required for acceptance: ignited by the burning coals of the Brass Altar on the Golden Altar by the High Priest.
42. In all of my research I came across one gentleman who provides an excellent commentary on these things we have just learned. His comments will bring us back to the point in our study where the sacred incense came into view:

Ridout, Samuel. *Lectures on the Tabernacle*. (New York: Loizeaux Brothers, 1914), 377-78:

All true worship must be in the name of and by the Priest (Jesus Christ). All full and intelligent worship must be through Him who has passed into the holiest having obtained eternal redemption. This emphasizes the fact that all worship must be based upon the accomplished sacrifice of our Lord Jesus. God must righteously judge sin; but in His love He has done this in the person of His beloved Son. It is because God is holy that sin must be judged. The judgment has been borne by the divine Substitute, and therefore never will be visited upon His people. Now, therefore, God can dwell among them, and their praises flow forth. But they could not be near to Him, had not the holy One been forsaken of God, had not the anguish of Christ told out the awful yet blessed fact that God was there pouring out upon Him the wrath we deserved. The coals from the altar of burnt-offering, where the atoning sacrifice had gone up as a sweet savor to God, were used to kindle the incense at the golden altar.



This is gathered from the fact that fire was always burning upon the brazen altar. There was special warning as to “strange fire.” The one fire was that upon this brazen altar, a type of that divine holiness and righteousness which on the cross consumed the perfect Sacrifice, Christ. All else is “strange fire.” This fire upon the brazen altar came out before the Lord and consumed the sacrifice. This manifests the blasphemy of Nadab and Abihu who, in closest connection with that manifestation, despised the holy fire and took that of their own kindling to offer incense. Therefore the despised fire came forth again, not to consume the sacrifice, which had already been done, but to cut off in judgment those who refused to bow to God’s manifest will, expressed in perfect grace.

The two altars, therefore, must not be separated: praise must ever be based upon the sacrifice of Christ. It could not be otherwise without denying the very character of God and His truth.

43. The analyses of the sacred incense and the fire of the brass altar have been necessary for us to understand the ultimate severity imposed by God upon Nadab and Abihu for their impetuous disobedience to divine instructives.
44. No matter what the motivation, whether arrogance in the case of Aaron’s errant sons or through ignorance, the failure to honor God can be deadly.

Leviticus 10:1 - Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective firepans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it and offered strange fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them.

v. 2 - And fire came out from the presence of the Lord and consumed them, and they died before the Lord.

v. 3 - Then Moses said to Aaron, “It is what the Lord spoke, saying, ‘By those who come near Me I will be treated as holy, and before all the people I will be honored.’” So Aaron, therefore, kept silent.

45. This brings us back to the second example of disobedience related to the Ten Commandments from:

Freedman, David Noel. *The Nine Commandments*. New York: Doubleday, 2000), 74-75:

We will recall that the Israelites were an onerous bunch to lead in the wilderness. No sooner did God provide for their needs, then they complained about something else.

In Exodus 17, God instructs Moses to take the elders with him and to stand before “the rock of Horeb.” He is told to strike the rock with his rod “and water will come out from it.” As expected, the strike works just as God said it would.

We now fast-forward to Numbers 20. Again, the people are complaining about a lack of water, again Moses asks God what to do. This time, though, God does not instruct Moses to strike the rock with the rod, but simply to “speak to the rock,” and water would come forth. Why (would God) tell Moses to bring the rod if he was not supposed to use it?

In Numbers 17 a group of Levitical priests approaches Moses and Aaron, asking why Aaron was selected as high priest and not they. In order to demonstrate who was the legitimate high priest among the Levites, God instructed Moses to have these men given him their rods, which he was to place before the Arc of the Covenant.

The next day Moses collected the rods from before the Arc and brought them out to the people. When he showed them the rods, only Aaron’s had blossomed, demonstrating that Yahweh had chosen him over his fellow Levites. God then instructed Moses and Aaron to place Aaron’s rod next to the Arc so that it would be “a sign for rebels, and to end their murmurings, lest they die.”



46. The reason that God instructed Moses to bring Aaron's rod to the second "no water" test was so it might be a reminder to the congregation of its rebellious mental attitude which dishonored Him.
47. However, Moses is instructed on this occasion to not strike the rock but speak to it. The first "no water" test was a type of the cross. This one is to illustrate rebound.
48. Unfortunately, Moses didn't pick up on this and instead went into reversionism. His anger with the people caused him to enter into the three arrogant skills, a spiritual problem manifest by both his words and his actions:

Numbers 20:10 - Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly before the rock. And he said to them, "Listen now, you rebels; shall we bring forth water for you out of this rock?"

v.11 - Then Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came forth abundantly, and the congregation and their beasts drank.

49. Moses displays arrogance before a people he is commissioned to lead. It was not his job to tell them they were being rebellious. God intended to show them grace while teaching the doctrine of rebound. God commanded Moses to speak to the rock, not to the people.
50. Instead Moses spoke to the people and struck the rock—twice! In addition, he took credit to himself and Aaron for providing the water. All of these were bad decisions, which were influenced by an arrogant motivation from a rebellious mental attitude. What resulted was wrong action.
51. As we have learned with Nadab and Abihu, God does not permit those in positions of authority to dishonor Him, His Word, and His plan. Although Moses was not executed on the spot, he was fired and denied the privilege of leading the people into Canaan:

Numbers 20:12 - But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you have not believed Me, to treat Me as holy in the sight of the sons of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."