52 Days of Building a Second Wall with the Word and Wisdom

**Fragrance of God’s Presence**

Day 37 – June 19, 2013

As the time for the Lord’s return draws near, **we are called to come closer and closer to the Lord, so we can touch the heart of God like Moses and Abraham.** We are called to stand in the gap with His mercy and love, **praying the heart of God for all people.**  When our hearts are filled with His heart, and we live holy lifestyles, our prayers and worship change the atmosphere around us, like fragrant incense.

We are in a season where God wants us to go deeper into His Presence. Let’s look again at the Tabernacle/Temple, which is a picture of our developing relationship with God. **There are three main areas of the tabernacle, three places of prayer and worship that the Lord has called all believers to enter into; places where we are to ask, seek, and knock.**

**Matthew 7:7-8** "**Ask**, and it will be given to you; **seek**, and you will find; **knock**, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.”

The first area of the Tabernacle is the **outer court** with the Bronze Altar for burnt offerings and the Brass laver for cleansing. In the outer courts we are dealing with our flesh, our issues. This is a place of repentance and warfare, a place for us to die to our flesh. **We come to God asking Him about our issues.**  There are many distractions in this place so we often get stuck in our prayers; repeating the same prayers over and over. If we shun the altar of death to our flesh and the laver of cleansing, we will stay stuck in unrepentance, hurt, depression, and self. Our prayers will be all about our issues.

**Psalm 119:107** “I am exceedingly afflicted; revive me, O LORD, according to Your word.”

Passing through the first veil is the second area, the **Holy Place**. This area contains the Golden Lampstand, the Golden Table of Showbread, and the Golden Altar of Incense. In the Holy Place we are seeking the Lord. To **seek** is to pursue, to practice, and to be still. When we seek Him we will find His heart and be strengthened. Our soul will be quiet and calm. Our words are now few, filled with praises of our heart. **We seek to know what is on His heart so we can pray His will.** In this place there is liberty, but not intimacy.

**Psalms 40:1-2** “I waited patiently for the LORD; and He inclined to me and heard my cry. He brought me up out of the pit of destruction, out of the miry clay, and He set my feet upon a rock making my footsteps firm.”

The third area behind the second veil is the **Most Holy Place**, which contains the Ark of the Covenant, the place where the presence of God dwells. This is the place where we are knocking on the door. To **knock** means pounding, to submit, prostrate, and silence. This is a place of intimacy with the Lord, where we are quiet as **God is talking to us.** As we prostrate ourselves before Him, our hearts are pounding with love and reverence. This is a place of flowing communion and heart to heart fellowship with Almighty God.

**Psalm 42:7** “Deep calls to deep at the sound of Your waterfalls; all Your breakers and Your waves have rolled over me.”

**Where are we in our prayer life? Where do we position ourselves each day?** We must get out of the outer courts so we can intercede for the people as we are called to do. We must daily position ourselves to go into go into the Most Holy Place to pray the heart of God.

The closer we get to God, the more we can sense the fragrance of His presence. When we spend intimate time with Him, His fragrance comes on us and it is evident to all around us. As we receive the fragrance of His presence, we must carry it to others.

Let’s look at four of the spices used to make fragrant incense. These spices point to the fragrance God’s presence produces in our lives.

* **Cinnamon** points to God being zealous and jealous for His children. We respond in obedience to His Love, as our minds are transformed by His presence, and we seek to please Him.
* **Calamus** points to our brokenness to sin, and the purging and cleansing He brings. We desire His Love and our hearts receive His presence and comfort.
* **Cassia** points to our response to His love. Our will accepts His presence, resulting in complete worship.
* **Myrrh** points to our intimacy in His love. Our heart longs for His presence, His love, and His suffering.

When priests would burn incense on the golden altar of incense, they would take coals from the bronze altar and put them in a censor. Incense would be mixed with oil and then sprinkled on the coals; resulting in a pleasing fragrance.

The **fire from the coals** is the Father’s Heart, one of zeal and jealousy for His children. The **censor** is the heart of Christ Jesus that carries the heart of the Father. The **oil** is the Holy Spirit, and the **incense** is the Bride of Christ, the Church; who has been crushed and then placed with the Holy Spirit to produce a sweet smelling aroma.

We are priests to the Lord and we must be in position to be cleansed and covered with holiness. We must be in position to be clothed in our ephods to hear His voice. We must be in position to please Him so we may see His mercy and love for His people.

**Leviticus 16:12** “Then he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from the altar before the Lord, with his hands full of sweet incense beaten fine and bring it inside the veil.”

The censer (Jesus) is filled with the heart of the Father (zealous and jealous love) and in His hand is His Bride full of sweet incense. She has been tested and tried with suffering and is now brought inside the veil, into the presence of the Lord.

**Leviticus 16:13** “And he shall put the incense on the fire before the Lord that the cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat that is on the Testimony, lest he die.”

**Through our lifestyle of holiness and worship as a sweet smelling aroma before God in the secret place, a fragrant cloud is produced that covers the mercy seat.** This is where those who have entered into the Most Holy Place hear His heart and respond to His heart with mercy.

We pay a price for this kind of a lifestyle of worship and prayer; it is rare like the ingredients of the holy spices and oils. **A heart of worship must come from a heart that is filled with His love, love that is only for Him!**

When the fire does not come from the Lord, our hearts are not for Him, which will cause death.

**Leviticus 10:1-3** “Then Nadab and Abihu, he sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and **offered profane fire** before the Lord, which He had not commanded them. So fire went out from the Lord and devoured them, **and they died before the Lord**. And Moses said to Aaron, this is what the Lord spoke, saying: By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; and before all the people I must be glorified.”

They took their censers and put strange or foreign fire in them. This fire was from an idolatrous heart of worship. Apparently they had taken fire for their censers from a place other than the Bronze Altar fire, which was the only legitimate fire for prayer and worship. **What kind of fire is in our heart to touch the heart of God?** Is it zealous for Him alone!

**Please read Numbers 16.**

There was a great rebellion against Moses and the Lord. Two hundred and fifty men came and said they were just as holy as Aaron and Moses and they should be allowed to go before the Lord. Moses told them to come the next day with censors and incense, and God would choose who He would bring near to Himself. Their hearts were filled with rebellion and division, not the pleasing aroma of obedience and love. Fire came out from the Lord and He consumed the two hundred and fifty men who were offering incense. **We must be very careful with the prayers and worship we offer up to the Lord.**

On the next day, all the people continued to grumble and rebel. God’s anger was kindled and He sought to consume them instantly. Moses tells Aaron to run and take His censor full of coals from the Lord’s altar and take incense and offer up prayers on the golden altar to make atonement for them, to stand between the living and the dead. **We must be like Aaron and come before the Lord in the way that is right and pleasing to the Lord and make intercession for mankind**.

**Revelation 8:3-5** “Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and **much incense was given to him, so that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which was before the throne**. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand. Then the angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar, and threw it to the earth; and there followed peals of thunder and sounds and flashes of lightning and an earthquake.”

**DIGGING DEEPER:**

**Which part of the Tabernacle do you spend the most time in during your times of prayer and worship?** Search your heart for any profane fire you have offered up to the Lord, and ask for His forgiveness and cleansing. Position yourself to get closer to His heart every day.

Please read **Psalm 119:105-128** and let God’s Word strengthen and encourage you to come closer.

Remember to work on your memory verse: **Psalm 119:105**