

#275 Kingdom: Authority and Incense

The church in preparation and development must become the church in fulfillment or there is no purpose in the maturing process. Always learning but never coming to the knowledge of the Truth is a big waste of time and effort. Always preparing but never coming to the fulfillment of the preparation is popular but is not God's purpose for our Christian life. This has become an indication of failure rather than success of the ministry. For the last several years this failure has been laid at the feet of the five-fold ministry of Ephesians 4:11. It is assumed that since we didn't have a valid apostolic ministry that the result was an undeveloped church. However, we have heard about the "apostolic ministry" and this doctrine of maturity through this ministry for well over 30 years. We have also attended many of these meetings where the "apostolic ministries" were sharing and observed the results. To be honest we haven't seen any difference in the growth level of "apostolic churches" than we have in churches that only had the ministry of a pastor.

The summation then of our opinion, arrived at by observation, is that all the responsibility cannot be laid at the feet of the ministries. The responsibility for growth must be owned by the church itself. In other words if a ministry ministers to and teaches a comatose church there will be no result. If the "church" doesn't DO what the word says it doesn't matter how effective the ministry is there will be no results in the development of the spiritual life of the believers.

Knowledge alone is not progress if there is no development within the spiritual life. Eating every Sunday from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil will do nothing for the spiritual life of the church. However, eating from the Tree of Zoe-Life is a personal responsibility as it was in the original garden. No one was "ministering the fruit from the Tree of Life." It was their personal responsibility to choose which trees to eat from.

Even if a valid "apostolic ministry" laid hands on every member of the body they couldn't impart spiritual authority to anyone. That only comes by personal growth, submission, obedience and development of our spiritual life [Zoe]. There are no shortcuts to spiritual maturity and, therefore, no shortcuts to spiritual authority.

If the "ministries" are responsible before God for the maturity of the saints there must be a solution to this problem of the eternal childhood of the believer and the lack of spiritual authority throughout the church. Until the church can effectively alter the atmosphere of an area and the society in which they live they cannot qualify as either "salt" or as "light." An accurate doctrine of "salt and light" never changed a society or the world around us.

The visible church has just assumed that the world will grow worse and worse as the years pass and there is nothing we can do about it. The proof is the terrible condition of the earth that culminates in the destruction and war in the Book of Revelation. It is thought that nothing can be done about it until Jesus returns on His big white horse with His saints and conquers the evil forces that have been loosed upon the earth. In the Book of Revelation multitudes of demons are released from diverse places to afflict the earth and its inhabitants. The "postponement of church authority" then appears to be a valid interpretation of the social position of the saints. We wish that we had the authority to subdue the nations and alter the atmosphere of the world and

someday we will! However this is ONLY After Jesus returns!

This is a kind of universal understanding throughout the church. But what if Jesus received ALL authority over heaven and over earth and He delegated that authority to us “in this church age” Suppose we had authority over principalities and powers, over demonic forces and over all the power of the enemy but didn’t know it or act upon it?” If Jesus has paid the price to restore man back to his original authority over the earth and the things that moved on it but man decides to submit to the status quo, would Jesus be pleased?” Did He die for a defeated church or a glorious church?

My theory is that the church has been given a legal position in heavenly places near the throne of God and been given all authority and every benefit necessary to begin to cooperate with Christ to rule over the nations, now!

1 Cor 15: 24] then comes the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. [25] **For He must reign [present tense] until He has put all His enemies under His feet.** [26] The last enemy that will be abolished is death. [27] For HE HAS PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET.

Jesus has been given all authority over heaven and earth [past tense] but this speaks of a time [either present or future tense] when He has effectively “**abolished all rule, authority and power**” and every enemy has been put under His feet. “Under His feet” suggests that this victory will be realized through the church that IS His body. If Jesus HAS NOW all authority in heaven and in earth why doesn’t He use it and subdue all the enemies? The only logical answer is that He is training His church [the one He is building] in overcoming and developing them for His eternal government. If He did it for us we wouldn’t be trained in overcoming or adjusted to His absolute rule and government.

1 Corinthians 15: 24 indicates that this exercise of authority is just part of the Kingdom fulfillment through the church in this time period. The “Kingdom” will be established BEFORE He delivers it up to His God and Father. By that time He will have abolished ALL rule, all authority and power and conquered ALL His enemies and put them under His feet.

Is that when He returns on His big white horse or is that supposed to happening now through the church that He is building? If there is a “final” conquering in the Book of Revelation before He offers up the Kingdom to His Father that still doesn’t excuse the church from participation now!

If this is a valid interpretation of the climax of His authority on the earth through the church then very much work must be done to convince the church that she needs to move out of her complacency and into the fulfillment of her training in ruling over God’s enemies.

The Tabernacle of Moses will be a great help in teaching the Lampstand Church how to function at the Altar of Incense. This revelation is originating in the Showbread that is displayed on the Gold Table opposite the Lampstand. The function of “Burning Incense” can only be seen in the High Priest and His sons as they function as one in the one Priesthood after the order of

Melchizedek.

It is not that we don't have enough information in the scriptures or word pictures to explain this ministry. The problem seems to be developing a few Kings and Priests that have experienced this ministry of burning Incense and can lead others into this reality. Surely in the last 2000 years there has to be many that overcame at the Altar of Incense and have left us a legacy of experience and knowledge in how it works. If there is I haven't discovered it yet.

Therefore, this next restoration will require "pioneers" to learn how it works and develop within the various experiences to lead others into the reality of the power, dominion and authority of the Incense Altar ministry. It seems to me that this IS the foundation of the "Kingdom Experience." Another doctrine about the Kingdom or another theory about the Incense will not benefit us very much. The reality of results must be seen in the experience of burning Incense. The proof of the "Incense Ministry" is in the fulfillment seen in Psalm 8. This Psalm uncovers the evidence that this experience is valid for the church today. Psalm 8 brings the experience of burning Incense into clear focus and combines the Altar of Incense with the Kingdom Government of God and the ruling over God's adversaries, to make His enemies and the revengeful to cease.

This will change both the atmosphere around us and the society in which we live. God has clearly designed man for this purpose. Hebrews 2 tells us that this is not yet the extent of all the things that have been subjected to man. If we can see what was subjected to Jesus, our High Priest, it will give us some insight into what has been subjected to His body, the manifested sons of God.

Redefining the church of God by its function at the Incense Altar and by the burning of Incense will not be easy. Since most of us have not even been successful in Outer Court prayer it seems like too much of a leap to begin speaking about Incense prayer, praise, worship and thanksgiving. Unless there is some actual light on the Lampstand and until we have actually eaten from the Showbread and experienced something of the torn Veil all this about Incense seems premature. At least out of our league! If we haven't at least passed through the Second Veil in our experience, Incense prayer is just limited to the brass Censer. Still, none of this can discourage us because we must begin someplace and demonstrate to God that we are here to be taught and disciplined into this ministry. We surely can't wait until we are mature in the ministry of burning Incense before we begin.

In past church history and also in our recent past, the emphasis of prayer has been upon our needs and what we wanted God to do for us and our assembly. Our prayer time was spent by explaining to God how we felt and how inadequate we were to carry on the work. We may have explained to God our commitment and consecration and how much we wanted to do the will of God and what was hindering us. I am certainly not saying this kind of prayer is wrong but that this has nothing to do with incense prayer or the prayer of cooperation with God to meet God's needs. Our prayer time may have consisted of praise and worship and exalting God and speaking of the wonderful things that He has done. Incense prayer is still different than all other forms of prayer and will be essential to this next restoration of God within the church.

EXODUS 30:1 "Moreover, **you shall make an altar as a place for burning incense**; you shall

make it of acacia wood. [2] “Its length shall be a cubit, and its width a cubit, it shall be square, and its height shall be two cubits; its horns shall be of one piece with it. [3] “And you shall overlay it with pure gold, its top and its sides all around, and its horns; and you shall make a gold molding all around for it. [4] “And you shall make two gold rings for it under its molding; you shall make them on its two side walls__on opposite sides__and they shall be holders for poles with which to carry it. [5] “And you shall make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. [6] “And you shall **put this altar in front of the veil** that is near the ark of the testimony, in front of the mercy seat that is over the ark of the testimony, where I will meet with you. [7] “And Aaron shall **burn fragrant incense** on it; **he shall burn it every morning when he trims the lamps.** [8] “And when Aaron trims the lamps at twilight, he shall burn incense. There shall be **perpetual incense** before the LORD throughout your generations. [9] “**You shall not offer any strange incense on this altar, or burnt offering or meal offering; and you shall not pour out a libation on it.** [10] “And Aaron shall make atonement on its horns once a year; he shall make atonement on it with the blood of the sin offering of atonement once a year throughout your generations. It is most holy to the LORD.

EXO 30:34 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Take for yourself spices, stacte and onycha and galbanum, spices with pure frankincense; there shall be **an equal part of each.** [35] “And with it you shall **make incense, a perfume, the work of a perfumer, salted, pure, and holy.** [36] “And you shall beat some of it very fine, and put part of it before the testimony in the tent of meeting, where I shall meet with you; it shall be most holy to you. [37] “And the incense which you shall make, **you shall not make in the same proportions for yourselves;** it shall be holy to you **for the LORD.** [38] “Whoever shall make any like it, to use as perfume, shall be cut off from his people.”

When we get our first understanding of real incense prayer we are aware that most of our concerns when we pray are for ourselves and what we want. Incense prayer is wholly for the Lord and is what meets His needs and has nothing to do with what man wants. In the recent past, a popular song said “Jesus on the main line, tell Him what you want”. This scripture makes it quite clear that trying to offer up incense prayer for ourselves is not acceptable to God.

God was very precise in His instructions to Moses concerning every aspect of the Tabernacle and the sacrifices and the garments, and the furniture and where it was placed in the Tabernacle. There are hundreds of details that God was very careful to give Moses concerning every aspect of the service of the priests. He doesn't put specific details upon the water for the laver or what kind of wood was to be used upon the altar but He is very careful to detail the four substances that was used to make incense and that they were to be mixed in equal parts. We see that it takes a skilled person to make the incense and to assemble the mixture so that it becomes a perfume for God alone. If anybody tried to make this specific perfume for himself he would be rejected by God.

What a great honor it would be to be declared by God to be a skilled “perfumer” when we enter into incense kind of prayer. While “prayer” is not uncommon, incense prayer is very rare. This I believe is what is on God's heart: To restore incense prayer to the church! He must begin with the priests who are consecrated to burn incense.

2CH 26:16 But when he became strong, his heart was so proud that he acted corruptly, and he was unfaithful to the LORD his God, for he entered the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense. [17] Then Azariah the priest entered after him and with him eighty priests of the LORD, valiant men. [18] And they opposed Uzziah the king and said to him, **“It is not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the LORD, but for the priests, the sons of Aaron who are consecrated to burn incense.** Get out of the sanctuary, for you have been unfaithful, and will have no honor from the LORD God.” [19] But Uzziah, with a censer in his hand for burning incense, was enraged; and while he was enraged with the priests, the leprosy broke out on his forehead before the priests in the house of the LORD, beside the altar of incense. [20] And Azariah the chief priest and all the priests looked at him, and behold, he was leprous on his forehead; and they hurried him out of there, and he himself also hastened to get out because the LORD had smitten him.

For several years we have emphasized that this next restoration will be preceded by a full consecration of the people of God. God requires the consecration offering from those who will burn fragrant incense to the Lord and unto Him alone. Of course The Lampstand church must be functioning in order to illuminate the Showbread to get the revelations to burn incense.

The problem is this; It is not JUST consecration that is required but the accurate understanding of God and of the times of the Lord and what God wants to accomplish on the earth at that moment.. For example ; Aaron’s sons were fully consecrated but were not careful about the other requirements concerning fire.

LEV 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.** [2] And fire came out from the presence of the LORD and consumed them, and **they died** before the LORD. [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.’”**

Physical death in the Old Testament speaks to us of spiritual death in the New Testament. The real fire to burn the incense must come within the Presence of the Holy Spirit and is certainly not a stirring up of the flesh to give a false impression of the anointing. The scriptures don’t say where they got the fire but just that the error was with the fire. God calls it strange fire. The other explanation given is that they were not commanded to offer this incense.

The Bible say they took their respective firepans and placed Incense on them and placed fire on them. This was not the Gold censer that was only used on the Day of Atonement to enter the Most Holy Place.

The only other fire in the Tabernacle was on the Brass Altar for sacrifice or the fire that was being used to boil the flesh of the peace offerings so we may assume that they used that fire instead of the fire on the Gold altar. Of course there is the fire upon the Lampstand. In Leviticus 16 there may be a better understanding. 12] “And he shall take a firepan full of coals of fire from upon **the altar before the LORD**, and two handfuls of finely ground sweet incense, **and bring it inside**

the veil. [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 ark of the testimony, lest he die. [14]

“Moreover, he shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle it with his finger on the mercy seat on the east side; also in front of the mercy seat he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times.

The fire in the gold firepan or censer was used only on the Day of Atonement, that is once a year. This was not the season to burn incense in the gold censer. Besides it was only for the high priest to enter behind the veil and burn incense in this way. The fire was placed in the firepan from off the Altar of Incense and the incense was carried in the hand of the high priest until he was just before the ark so that the cloud would cover the mercy seat. It appears that they were burning the incense for themselves and in the wrong way and in the wrong place and on the wrong day. That makes “strange fire”. This incense must be accompanied with the sprinkled blood upon the mercy seat and sprinkled seven times in front of the mercy seat. They were burning the incense without the blood also.

We are not even suggesting that we could even begin to do this ministry because that is reserved for our High Priest alone. What we are speaking about in this study is the incense that is burned upon the gold altar that now stands behind the torn veil before the Ark of the Covenant.

Now we could relate many other instances from the scriptures that speak of both the proper and the improper use of incense.

During the apostasies of Israel the story of two women was related to Ezekiel by God. These two represented Samaria and Jerusalem who turned from God. In their backsliding they used both the holy oil and the incense for their own pleasure. EZE 23:40] “Furthermore, they have even sent for men who come from afar, to whom a messenger was sent; and lo, they came__for whom you bathed, painted your eyes, and decorated yourselves with ornaments; [41] **and you sat on a splendid couch with a table arranged before it, on which you had set My incense and My oil. [42] “And the sound of a carefree multitude was with her;**

Our purpose in this study is to continue to speak of “Kingdom Prayer.” This IS the effective prayer where man cooperates with God in making decisions for the earth. The revelation of burning incense is to alert us to the truth that burning incense [prayer, praise, worship and thanksgiving] is the most important ministry in this restoration. The emphasis must still be upon obedience to the conditions set by God and to establish God’s purpose on the earth. In other words; God places great importance upon proper prayer offered up as a sweet perfume in His nostrils. However, the sweetness of the odor is in the fact that at last man has begin to fulfill the purpose revealed in Genesis 1. That is to assume the sovereignty [dominion] over the earth and to rule it under the sovereignty of God.

Incense Prayer is not a blessing centered activity that we enter into in a carefree way but is the training for a ministry in eternity. It is where we stand with God and in the circle of His sovereignty to activate His will upon the earth.

Prayer contains such amazing promises that are so broad that we hesitate to really believe what we are reading. God puts no parameters or limitations upon the answers to prayer but He does give a few requirements to participate. In addition there are different levels of prayer that we have loosely identified as Outer Court Prayer, Holy Place and Most Holy Place prayer. These different levels of prayer seem to have various degrees of requirements. What we are addressing in this paper is “the ministry of Kingdom prayer” that we are relating to burning incense.

The point is this; Man or the church has no autonomous authority. We only have authority in the degree that We are functioning under the sovereignty of God. Unless we are totally under the sovereignty of God, experientially, we have NO authority. ZERO! Adam only had authority when he was experientially under the sovereignty of God. God never took away Adam’s sovereignty, Adam just came out from under the source of his sovereignty.

One of the essential reasons for the Consecration Offering is to bring us back fully under God’s absolute sovereignty and to keep us in that position the rest of our time on earth. We will only have dominion, authority and sovereignty as we remain under His absolute sovereignty. Trying to exercise some autonomous authority is what has bankrupted the ministries of the church. If we could persuade ourselves and others that we are absolutely nothing when we are not in a Vine-branch union with Christ we would solve most of the ministry problems in the church. A branch that is grafted into the Vine can do nothing of itself and cannot do what the Vine is not doing.

A deep distrust in ourselves and our ability must precede this next restoration. No one can come to the Father except through Jesus Christ. Since the Altar of Incense is now directly with the Ark of the Covenant or the Throne of God it is at the Father’s feet. Trying to ascend to that place on our own initiative is a big disappointment and a certain impossibility. Unless the Son invites us to participation we are helpless to proceed. Does that mean He is a respecter of persons? It means He is protecting our own safety. Remember Nadab and Abihu? The natural and carnal children of God are not yet prepared to burn Incense.

Hopefully the manifested sons of God [sons of the High Priest] will fulfill this ministry and God will begin to accomplish His will through them. My opinion is that it doesn’t mean these mature saints will be out doing great exploits “for God” but that they will be cooperating with God at the Incense Altar and God will be free to accomplish great things in a short time because man has asked Him to do it. The first creation was without man’s help or permission. This end time ministry will be the training for the eternal Kingdom ministry and is a cooperation between God and man.