

Smoke

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Let Prayer Rise

- In Revelation 8 and Psalm 141, prayer is described as incense rising before God, a holy fragrance that reaches His throne.
- The altar of incense in Exodus chapter 30 is one of the items inside the Holy Place of the tabernacle.

Isaiah 6:3-5 (ESV) 3 And one called to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!” 4 And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. 5 And I said: “Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!”

- Be careful of becoming response/result driven.

- Prayer is not primarily about a specific response or result.
- Prayer is an act of worship, surrender and trust.
- It is supernatural and relational.

Psalm 141:2-4 (ESV) 2 Let my prayer be counted as incense before you, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice! 3 Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips! 4 Do not let my heart incline to any evil, to busy myself with wicked deeds in company with men who work iniquity, and let me not eat of their delicacies!

- The goal is the alignment of my heart to His will, not the alignment of His will to my heart.
- During Isaiah's time they burned incense, kept the feasts, and made offerings while ignoring the sin in their hearts.

Isaiah 1:13 (ESV) Bring no more vain offerings; incense is an abomination to me.

- Prayer is incense before God, but it is empty incense when it is disconnected from obedience, repentance, and surrender.

Revelation 8:3-4 (ESV) 3 And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer, and he was given much incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar before the throne, 4 and the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, rose before God from the hand of the angel.

- Prayer is challenging when we don't know God personally.