

**SLAVES SET FREE**  
**A Study in the Book of Exodus**  
*Holy Bible, New International Version ©2011*

**The Altar of Incense and the Sabbath**

**Exodus 30–31**

*"Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today.  
The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The LORD will fight for you;  
you need only to be still."* Exodus 14:13–14

**Day 1: Read Exodus 30:1–10, 34–38.**

1. What was to be burned on the incense altar?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Hebrews 8:5 explains that the tabernacle was a copy and a shadow of what is in heaven. Read Psalm 141:2 and Revelation 5:8; 8:3–4. What is incense a shadow of?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Exodus 30:34–38 describes the incense to be used. What are some of the descriptive words used for incense?

If incense is a picture of prayer, how does God view our prayers? (Remember that God desires to have an intimate relationship with us.)

4. How often was Aaron to offer incense? How often are we to pray? (Col. 4:2; Lk. 18:1; 1 Thess. 5:17)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Included in his office as high priest, Aaron brought incense and prayers before God for the nation of Israel. What role do Jesus and the Holy Spirit play in regards to prayer today? (Rom. 8:26; Heb. 4:14–16; 7:25; 9:24)

**Day 2: Read Exodus 30:11–16.**

6. Verse 12 speaks of paying a ransom. What is the purpose of this ransom?
7. What distinctions were made in how much was paid?
8. Who ultimately became the ransom? (Matt. 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:5–6; Heb. 9:15)

How was the ransom in Exodus a shadow of Christ?

**The shekel** is an ancient biblical unit of measurement. It was the most common standard used among the Hebrew people for both weight and value. In the New Testament, the standard wage for one day of labor was a shekel.

The word *shekel* means simply "weight." In New Testament times, a shekel was a silver coin weighing, well, one shekel (about .4 ounces or 11 grams). Three thousand shekels equaled one talent, the heaviest and largest unit of measurement for weight and value in Scripture.<sup>1</sup>

**Day 3: Read Exodus 30:17–33.**

9. What did Aaron and his sons have to do before entering the Tent of Meeting? (30:17)
10. What was the purpose of this act?
11. Who cleanses us, and how? (1 Jn. 1:7; Heb. 10:19–22)
12. Describe the components of the anointing oil. (30:22–25)
13. What would happen if anyone made a different combination of either oil or incense? (30:33, 38)
14. What was the purpose of the anointing oil (how was it used)? (30:26–30)
15. Read Luke 4:18–22; how does this idea of anointing deepen our understanding of Christ?

**Day 4: Read Exodus 31:1–11.**

16. Who did God choose to be the craftsmen for his work?
17. How were these men able to do the work that was given them?
18. Read 1 Corinthians 12:12–26. How is Exodus 31:1–11 a living picture of this portion of Scripture?
19. What gifts, abilities, and talents has God given you to do his work within the body of Christ—the church?

**Day 5: Read Exodus 31:12–18.**

20. Give some reasons for why God established the Sabbath.
21. What was the penalty for not keeping the Sabbath?
22. The Sabbath foreshadows heaven because heaven is the eternal Sabbath rest. God designed the Sabbath to be the one day of the week set apart for both worship and rest, so heaven will be a place of worship and rest. Hebrews 3:16–4:11 speaks of God's rest. What does this passage urge us to do?

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This lesson on Exodus is adapted from "Slaves Set Free" by New Life Glenside Women's Bible Study, 1996–1997.

\*📖 indicates the passage is for further study.

<sup>1</sup> Fairchild, Mary. "What Is a Shekel?" Learn Religions, Aug. 29, 2020, [learnreligions.com/shekel-worth-its-weight-in-gold-3977062](https://www.learnreligions.com/shekel-worth-its-weight-in-gold-3977062).