

**TREASURES FROM THE TENT--DAY FOUR**  
**“The Altar of Incense, Ark of the Covenant**  
**and Fellowship with God”**  
**Grades 1-3**

**Exodus 25:10-22, Heb. 4:12-16,**  
**Rev. 2:17, Exodus 30:1-10, 34-38**

**Materials Needed:** Incense  
Good smelling objects  
Story pictures

**Objectives:** As a result of this lesson, I want my student

To Know: The Ark of the Covenant was accessible only to the High Priest, only once a year and only with the blood of the atoning sacrifice. The Ten Commandments, jar of manna and Aaron's rod which all showed God's holiness were covered by the mercy seat.

The altar of incense was directly in front of the Holy of Holies and a very costly fragrance was continually burned.

Basic Teaching: One can confidently enter the presence of a Holy God without fear because Jesus' atoning sacrifice has made access to a merciful God. Therefore, one should offer prayers to God which are fragrantly pleasing to Him.

To Respond: by confidently entering God's presence offering prayers which are pleasing to Him.

**Tabernacle Time:**

- I. The Ark of the Covenant
  - A. Covered with gold
  - B. Only the High Priest could enter
    - 1. Once a year
    - 2. Only with blood of a sacrifice
  - C. Inside the Ark
    - 1. Jar of manna
    - 2. Aaron's rod
    - 3. Ten Commandments
  - D. The mercy seat
    - 1. Covered the Ark
    - 2. Was covered by two cherubim

**Approach:** Have good things for the children to smell. (Possibly before hand put some room deodorizer or potpourri in the room to make the whole room smell good when the

students enter.) You might want to play a game where a child closes his or her eyes, smells the object and then tries to guess what it is. Good smelling objects might include: An orange, some cinnamon, strawberries, a flower, etc. Ask: do you like to smell good things? Did you know that in the Tabernacle, God like to smell good things too? There was a special altar where incense was burned. When it was burned, it made the whole Tabernacle smell good.

- II. The Altar of Incense
  - A. Overlaid with gold
  - B. Directly in front of the Ark but separated by a curtain
  - C. Incense was burned
    - 1. Only God's special recipe
    - 2. Continually

Explain what incense is (have some to show if possible).  
 This was a very special place for the priest to go. When he was burning incense on the altar, he was standing right in front of the Ark where God was.

(Show picture.)  
 There was a big curtain there, so he couldn't see God, but how do you think he might have felt knowing that he was right next to where God was? Do you think he was happy to know that he was burning the incense that God had said to bring. He knew that THIS was the incense God enjoyed smelling. But did you know that there is something that God enjoys even more than the good smell of that incense and it is something that those who belong to His family can give Him?

Have a student read Psalm 141:2.  
 God says that there are some prayers that do NOT smell good to him.

Here is a boy who is praying. (Show picture.) But this boy does not really want to go God's way. He just likes to do things his own way. Then he wants god to help him and so he prays and asks God to help him. Do you think God likes his prayer when he just wants to go his own way?

Proverbs 15:8

- III. The Fragrance of Prayer
  - A. Not all prayers smell good to God

Psalm 66:18

- 1. The prayer of the wicked
- 2. The prayer of someone who is holding on to sin in their heart

James 4:3

- 3. The prayer that is selfish
- B. The kind of prayers God likes

1. Adoration

Here's a girl. (Show picture.) She wants a new bike for her birthday. And that's the only reason she wants to pray and talk to God. She doesn't want the bike so she can share and let other people enjoy it. She just wants it all for herself. How do you think God likes her prayer? It is really just a selfish prayer.

Do you know what kind of prayer God does like? God loves it when we tell Him how wonderful He is. Why do you think God is so wonderful.

Let students come up with answers. Stop right then and lead the class in prayer so they hear what a prayer of adoration sounds like.

2. Confession

God also likes it when we come to him and tell Him the wrong things that we have done and we are truly sorry for them. He knows when someone is just pretending to be sorry and when someone really is sorry. Is there anything you have done that you know is wrong and you are sorry about and you need to tell God about? (Give a moment of silence for your students to pray.)

3. Thanksgiving

When you give a present to someone, what do you like them to say? When God gives so many good things to us, do you know what He loves to hear?

The same thing! (Go around the room and have each person say something they are thankful for. Move quickly and don't linger on students who can't think of something.)

4. Supplication

- a. For others
- b. For myself

There's one other prayer God likes.

When someone we know, or when we ourselves, need help or are afraid, God loves it when we turn to Him and ask Him for help.

**Conclusion:**

God loves it when those who are in His family offer prayers to Him. Do you pray to God? What kind of things do you say when you pray? Do you just ask God for a lot of things? Or do you thank Him? Do you tell Him how wonderful He is? Do you ask Him to help other people and give them what they need? Let's talk to him right now.

After you have concluded, hand out fold up calendar to help them remember how they can give God prayers that smell really good to Him. Remind them of the JOY it gives God when His children pray in the way He has said.