

## BFF340 Golden Bowls of Incense

**Scott Moore:** Welcome to the "Building Faith Families," podcast with Steve Demme. I'm your host Scott Moore. Thanks for joining us today. Good morning, Steve. How are you today?

**Steve:** I am chipper at this point, but I wasn't when I got up. How's that for an answer?

**Scott:** Sounds about right.

**Steve:** This is part three of our section on "Priests." As a friend of mine put it, "We are discovering the parameters of what it means to be a priest." Personally I find this study of what it means to be a priest to be ennobling."

"Ennoble" means to make noble or to dignify. To raise to the rank of nobility is what it literally means. I want you to hold on to this thought, "Raised to the rank of nobility" because that's going to be a key piece in our study today.

Let's pray: "Father, thank You for calling us to be priests. You're the one that uses the language, but I think we've got a lot of baggage to work through, at least I do, to get to that point where we are ennobled, dignified, and raised up to nobility.

I pray that You help us to have faith today to embrace this calling that You have bequeathed to us as Your children. We're not just your little adopted kids following around in Your wake, but You want us to be priests. You want us to represent You here on Earth, want us to work with You.

I pray that You help me to teach well today, give us all ears to hear what Your Spirit is saying. In Jesus' name, amen."

**Scott:** Amen. You don't need to just start making up words like bequeath and ennoble. We know you're smart.

**Steve:** For me, I have to work at this because, in some ways, I thought when I became a Christian, I'm adopted into God's family, and now it's my job to see how many other people I can influence to be adopted into God's family. I preach the Gospel, then hope for the best until the world ends and I'm going to heaven.

The idea of being a priest makes me stand a little taller. God calls His people priests first in Exodus, "Moses went up to God, and Jehovah called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel: 'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself. **'Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.'** These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel." (Exodus 19:3-6)

We talked a little bit about what it means to be a holy nation. It's a nation that's carved out. It belongs to God. He is our portion. We are his people. We are Holy unto the Lord, and a "Kingdom of priests." Kingdom implies royalty.

What does it mean to be a priest? Here is another passage that sheds light on this question: "Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead, and the ruler of

kings on earth. To Him Who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His blood and made us a **kingdom, priests** to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." (Revelation 1:5–6) Four chapters later, in Revelation 5:10, "You have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth."

1 Peter 2:9, "You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for His own possession." I love when I see how scripture is synthesized, so to speak. It all fits together from Exodus to 1 Peter to Revelation, the same language is employed. God hasn't changed His heart or His thoughts about His people. He wants us to be a holy people separate unto Himself, and we are to be a kingdom, or as He puts it, a royal priesthood.

**Exodus 30:7–8**, "Aaron (who was the high priest) shall burn fragrant incense on it every morning when he dresses the lamps, he shall burn it. When Aaron sets up the lamps at twilight, he shall burn it, a regular incense offering before Jehovah throughout your generations."

Twice a day, Aaron filled the lamps with oil. He offered a lamb a year old, a perfect lamb, foreshadowing Christ, and he burnt incense. Incense is prayer, as we see in Revelation 5:8, "When He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the 24 elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints."

When I think of Aaron going into the tabernacle, I think of him two times a day offering prayers. Consider Numbers 16 when the people revolted under Korah's leadership, and rebelled against Moses and Aaron.

"Moses said to Aaron, 'Take your censer, and put fire on it from off the altar and lay incense on it and carry it quickly to the congregation and make atonement for them, for wrath has gone out from Jehovah; the plague has begun.' So Aaron took it as Moses said and ran into the midst of the assembly. And behold, the plague had already begun among the people. And he put on the incense and made atonement for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stopped. Now those who died in the plague were 14,700, besides those who died in the affair of Korah. And Aaron returned to Moses at the entrance of the tent of meeting, when the plague was stopped." (Numbers 16:46–50)

Wow. You want to talk about intercessory prayer, there is intercessory prayer. It was Aaron who took his censer which was set apart for burning incense, stood between the people, and some, on one hand, were dying and some were living because he was standing there praying for the people.

I noticed that even when Korah and these other priests who had followed him, they didn't just throw away the censers but used them in the construction of the tabernacle. Our calling as praying priests is special and holy. We're priests who pray and make intercession for others.

On Saturday night, Johnny and I went to the Pennsylvania Family Institute annual banquet and the speaker was Mike Pompeo, who was the Secretary of State and Director of the CIA at the same time, only time that's ever happened under President Trump.

He's a born-again Christian. He speaks about the things of the Lord naturally. I don't know how else to put it. You can tell that man is a brother when you hear him speak. He is a down-to-earth follower of Jesus and unapologetic about his faith.

Before he spoke, I had an opportunity to hear all that God has been doing in the state of Pennsylvania for the last year. There is a bunch that has gone on that will never be seen or heard on mainstream media.

It's really encouraging to hear that because I pray and bind the strongman in my state of Pennsylvania almost every day. God has put that on my heart. This is my job as a priest living in Pennsylvania. By God's grace, I'm taking Pennsylvania for the King.

I'm going to bind the strong man who's trying to steal, kill, and destroy all that's right in our state. I think I told you this story once before. We have a congressman who I heard speak at a fund-raiser for a candidate I supported. After the speaking session we were mingling and I turned around, and there he was standing right beside me. I looked at him without being nervous and said, "I'm going to pray for you because you're Joshua down on the field, and I'm Moses up on the mountain."

He looked at me a little funny. Then I told him the story which I'm going to read to you right now. There's a battle with Amalek. On the battlefield, Moses said to Joshua, this is Exodus 17, "Choose for us men and go out and fight with Amalek. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand."

"Joshua did as Moses told him and fought with Amalek while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed. Whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed.

"Moses' hands grew weary, so they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it, while Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on one side and the other on the other side, so his hands were steady until the going down of the sun." Beautiful picture.

When I explained this to the congressman, I said, "You're Joshua on the field of battle. Thank you for what you're doing, but I'm going to pray for you like Moses on the hill. I'm going to believe for God to bless you and make you strong."

I didn't even know till yesterday, in reading ads for his campaign, that this same man was a general before he became a congressman.

This is what priests do. Priests stand up on the hill, and we keep our hands up while those that are laboring in the trenches push the battle through. We pray for those who are over us.

Jesus is the high priest, and He prayed and is praying for us. In John 17, I just read the whole chapter this morning. It's sublime. A friend of ours, Stan John noticed that the prayer Jesus gave to His disciples to pray which begins with "Our Father, Who art in Heaven" is not the Lord's prayer, it is the Prayer for His disciples. It is our

responsibility as disciples to say, "Yes, Father, Your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven."

The Lord's prayer is John 17, where Jesus is praying for His people. John 17:9, "I am praying for them." John 17:20–21, "I do not ask for these only but also for those who will believe in Me through their word, that they may all be one. Just as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us so that the world may believe that You have sent Me."

He's praying for those who were already followers of Jesus and looking forward to "Those who will believe in me through their word" and that's us.

**Scott:** That's awesome.

**Steve:** Hebrews 7:24 "He (Jesus) holds His priesthood permanently because He continues forever. Consequently, He is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them."

**Romans 8:34,** "Christ Jesus is the one Who died, more than that, Who was raised, Who is at the right hand of God, Who indeed is interceding for us."

Our high priest is praying for us right now. He prayed for us while He was on earth. He praying for us now. I count on those prayers. Sometimes I even say, "Lord, I don't know what to pray about this, but I say amen to what You're praying because where two agree it shall be done, and I agree with You."

We are a kingdom priests. We are a royal priesthood. Understanding all we have said, sheds light on this next verse.

"First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

"For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time. For this I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth. I desire then that in every place the men should pray." (1 Timothy 2:1–8)

We are a kingdom of priests. We are a royal priesthood. We are following our commander. We're following Jesus, Who is the high priest. What do you think of that?

**Scott:** I have to tell you, for me, there is a big mystery to all of this. As theologically, it bakes my noodle a little bit to think of Jesus praying basically to Himself, to the Father for us, but I'm OK with that. I'll take it. Does it make sense?

**Steve:** I'm still working on bake your noodle.

**Scott:** I'm like, "Well, why does He need to pray to Himself?" I don't get that, but it says He's praying for us, and He tells us to pray.

Then, I have this verse, and there's a couple verses actually, in Revelation 5 and Revelation 8, where it talks about the prayers of the people and these golden bowls of incense, which are the prayers of God's people.

When I pray, there's like a physical representation of that actually in Heaven, with the altar, with the incense there. To me, this is so far beyond my ability to comprehend.

**Steve:** No, your noodle is doing fine.

**Scott:** It's awesome. It's just I believe it, and I want to run with it whether I get it or not.

**Steve:** Let me encourage you a little bit.

**Scott:** Please.

**Steve:** Jeremiah 51:20. "The God of Israel is no idol. He's the Creator of everything that exists including His people, His own special possession. Jehovah of Heaven's Armies is His name." I like that. Jehovah of host, Jehovah of Heaven's Armies.

Then, He says to His people, "You're my battle axe and sword. With you, I will shatter nations and destroy many kingdoms." God wants to do this stuff with us. He doesn't need to do it for us. He wants to work with us. We are His bride.

We're His warrior bride. We are His precious chosen people, people for his own possession. We are His portion. He's our portion. This is His great joy. You know that. You've got kids. What is more blessed than doing stuff yourself? It's doing stuff with your wife and your kids. I don't know how else to describe it.

Yes, He could come back, He could do everything Himself, He could clean the house, and He could just right wrong in a heartbeat, but He wants us to cooperate. I don't even know why the because. Because He loves us, because He wants to. Because He is with us. When He says, "With you, I will do these things." It doesn't say, "For you." With you.

He takes great joy with Moses standing by Him. That's the way He is. He loves us the pieces. We are His chosen possession, we are His people. That's my answer. I don't know if it satisfies your noodle, but that's what keeps me going.

**Scott:** It helps. If you ever feel like your prayers aren't going anywhere or they don't really matter, just read Revelation 5:8.

**Steve:** Absolutely, because I feel like even if I don't see the answer to my prayers, I just added one more prayer of that bowl of incense.

I'm praying for stuff that even God says, "I'm going to do this." I said, "Well, good." I want to make sure you do it, and I want to add my prayer to the bowl of incense. I know that the devil's going to be put into a pit. "Father, in Jesus' name, put the devil in the pit." There you go, more incense.

In another place, it says, "Incense was added to the prayers of saints." Maybe that was Jesus' prayers. Together, when those bowls of incense are full, things start happening. I think that it took us 50 years to pray Roe v. Wade out of existence. I wish it was 49, but we're going to keep praying for a whole bunch of stuff. We're not going to be discouraged because we know how this thing's going to work out.

We are going to do our part to see that it happens. We're not just going to sit on our couches and twiddle our thumbs and wait for God to do everything. Amen?

**Scott:** Amen.

**Steve:** OK. Here's the things that I think I've told you I were reading one of these at the end of each section. These are things that I do now and try to do twice a day. This one is a little bit different. I've titled it "The name of God" because I was reading in Isaiah a few weeks ago, and I was caught by this expression. I'll read it slowly and see what you think.

"Behold the Name of Jehovah comes from afar, burning with His anger and in thick rising smoke. His lips are full of fury, and His tongue is like a devouring fire."

I went, "Whoa." I guess my noodle was being baked. I see what's happening here is the name of Jehovah, though, is a person. I think it's another name for Jesus, because it says, "He comes burning with His anger. His tongue's like a devouring fire," which sounds a lot like what's going to happen when Jesus returns this time. He's not coming as a lamb, He's coming as a lion.

I started studying God's name in scripture. The name of God is the theme to this devotion which I'm reading right now, and which is going to be in the notes.

First of all, let us draw near to God, Hebrews 4:16, "Let us with confidence draw near to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

Then I apply the blood of Jesus, based on 1 Peter 1:18p-20. "God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And the ransom He paid was not mere gold or silver. It was the precious blood of Christ. The sinless, spotless lamb of God. God chose Him as your ransom long before the world began, but He has now revealed Him to you in these last days."

Thinking about the spirit. This is a combination of coming into the Tabernacle where I offer my sacrifice which is now the precious blood of Christ, the spotless Lamb of God. Then I focus on the Spirit, filling up the lampstands. "He gives the spirit without measure," John 3:34.

Then, we wash at the laver since we're priests. This is what priests do. You wash your feet before you go into the Holy of Holies. "Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth." This is the washing of water with the Word.

Twice each day, priests not only offered up incense, not only filled up the golden lampstand with oil, He said He offered the Lamb. I don't have to offer another lamb, but I want to mix faith with what He already has done.

**John 1:** 29, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."

I like to do this twice a day. I'm seeking to be a priest, up-to-date under the New Covenant.

**Scott:** The verse that keeps hitting me every time you mention that part is, "We bring the sacrifice of praise." So instead of sacrificing the Lamb, just a sacrifice of praise. I

don't know where that's from, but I know it's in a song. I know it's in the verse somewhere too.

**Steve:** 1 Peter 2:5, we're to offer spiritual sacrifices. Then shout joyfully. Here I go again. Watch your ears.

"Our Father in heaven. Hallowed be Your name." Isn't that something? This is what Jesus told us to pray. "Hallowed be Your name." Then Psalm 100 says, "We bless and affectionately praise Your name." This is what we are told to do. I'm happy to do it and bless and affectionately praise His name and say, "Hallowed be Your name."

We also enter with Joyful Song. Do I have to sing again?

**Scott:** I was just thinking I ought to strap on my electric guitar, turn the amp on, and just go, "Bam," in accord with it because that's what I would do if I'm shouting and praising.

**Steve:** That would bake my ears.

**Scott:** [laughs]

**Steve:** OK. What do you think of the song I chose for this one? Pretty easy.

"All hail the power of Jesus' Name. Let angels prostrate fall. Bring forth the royal diadem and crown Him Lord of all. Bring forth the royal diadem and crown Him Lord of all."

This is an easy hymn to sing because the chorus, the second and third lines are the same. You only have to learn a couple lines. "Ye chosen seed of Israel's race. You ransomed from the fall. Hail Him Who saves you by His grace and crown Him Lord of all. Let every kindred, every tribe, on this terrestrial ball, to Him all majesty ascribe and crown Him Lord of all."

Hymns like this help us to sing and proclaim the truth. We're believing for every kindred and every tribe. Then, "Oh that with yonder sacred throng, we at His feet may fall. We'll join the everlasting song and crown Him Lord of all." This is preparation for heaven because we're going to be singing and worshipping with a countless multitude. Amen.

Then I give thanks based on a whole bunch of passages that magnify His name. "Let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man is standing before you well."

"This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:10-12)

**John 1:12,** "To all who received Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God."

"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Romans 10:13.

"Wherefore God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on

earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." Philippians 2:9-11.

Thank You, Father, for all of these expressions. Thank You that You have taught us to love Your name. Thank You that You've saved us in Your name. Thank You that You've healed people by Your name, and thank You that You have made us children by believing in Your name. Amen.

Then praise His name. Psalm 34: 3 says, "Oh, magnify Jehovah with me, and let us exalt His name together." Look at this verse, Scott. Hebrews 13:15, "Through Him, then let us offer up continually a sacrifice of praise to God that is the fruit of lips that acknowledge His name."

**Scott:** There you go. Amen.

**Steve:** Deuteronomy 32:3. "I will proclaim the name of Jehovah, ascribe greatness to our God. There is none like You, O Jehovah, You are great, and great is Your name." Jeremiah 10:6. "I will extol You my God and King, and bless Your name forever and ever. Every day I will bless You and praise Your name forever and ever. Great is Jehovah and greatly to be praised, and His greatness is unsearchable."

Father, we do bless Your name and we praise Your name, and it is a joy to do so, and a privilege. Hallelujah.

**Steve:** Then something I just added since last week. I'm going to add a verse about binding, because this is something God has put on my heart. I don't know if it's for everybody, but for me I have been doing a lot of binding.

When you think about this promise and the implications, I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. I bind the strong man, try to do it twice a day in Jesus name.

"Father, we bind the strong man. Thank You for the privilege to work with You. Thank You for calling us to be at Your side. Thank You for calling us to be priests and kings, a royal priesthood.

We bind the strong man in Jesus name, particularly with these elections coming up. We bind him in Washington, we bind him in the United States, we bind him behind abortion because we know that he's nothing but a stealer and a murderer, and we bind him in Jesus name. Hallelujah."

There you go. Now you get to respond to that. I'm all getting inspired here. I'm ready to go out with my prayer walk.

**Scott:** I'm speechless, man. I'm with you. We're out of time, too.

**Steve:** Father, thank You for these wonderful truths. It's been a rich feast just reading the word of God. I pray for all those who are reading, help their noodles to grasp this. Even if their noodles don't, I pray that You'll help us all in our spirits to link on to what You're saying to us today. In Jesus name, amen.

**Scott:** Amen. That's our show for this week, folks. Thanks for joining us for the Building Faith Families podcast with Steve Demme.



If you have a question for the show, email Steve at [spdemme@Gmail.com](mailto:spdemme@Gmail.com). If you have a question for me, you can reach me at [scott@unsocializedmedia.com](mailto:scott@unsocializedmedia.com). Thanks for joining us. Have a great week.