

EXODUS 30:6

Question: Where was the golden altar of incense placed? Inside the Holy Place? Or inside the Holy of Holies?

MASORETIC TEXT

testimony-the of-chest over which curtain-the of-face-to it thou-set-and

ונתתה אתו לפני הפרכת אשר על ארון העדת

there thee-to meet-I which testimony-the over which lid-the of-face-to
לפני הכפרת אשר על העדת אשר אועד לך שמה

“You are to put it in front of the curtain that is before the ark of the testimony (before the atonement lid that is over the testimony), where I will meet you.” Exodus 30:6 NET2

SAMARITAN TEXT

Red = not present

ונתתה אתו לפני הפרכת אשר על ארון העדות

testimony-the over which lid-the of-face-to

לפני הכפרת אשר על העדת אשר אועד לך שמה

“You are to put it in front of the curtain that is before the ark of the testimony (**before the atonement lid that is over the testimony**), where I will meet you.” Exodus 30:6 NET2

SEPTUAGINT TEXT

and thou-shalt-set it from-against the curtain the being over the chest of-the
καὶ θήσεις αὐτὸ ἀπέναντι τοῦ καταπετάσματος τοῦ ὄντος ἐπὶ τῆς κιβωτοῦ τῶν

testimonies in which I-shall-be-known to-thee there
μαρτυρίων, ἐν οἷς γνωσθήσομαι σοι ἐκεῖθεν.

“And you shall place it in front of the veil that is over the ark of witnesses by which I will be known to you there.” Exodus 30:6 NETS

HYPOTHESIS

The golden altar of incense was situated just inside the Holy of Holies, whither the high priest entered daily to burn incense, and once a year to sprinkle blood upon the covenant chest and upon the horns of the altar of incense.

Thus, the phrase “in front of the veil” views the altar from inside the Holy of Holies, perhaps the reason for which it is called most holy, literally “holy of holies”, in Exodus 30:10.