



OILS THROUGHOUT HISTORY FEATURING “THE DAYS OF CHRIST”

From my own personal knowledge of what I have learned growing up, there is a great deal of controversy around the time period surrounding the life of Christ. Historians place Jesus' birth somewhere between 6BC and 4 BC. So again, given my knowledge growing up and the reference of the Bible, I would say the culture in this time period would include people in which there were quite a bit of clergy, who seemed to actually be spiritually unaware. Towns were small. Jerusalem served as the “big city” that played host to Passover and Pentecost. In this time period, children were seen and not heard. There were games such as hopscotch, hoops and spinning tops. Marriage at a young age was the “thing” back then, as the life expectancy was about 45. Most people including children worked hard labor jobs. Many people were shepherds, as tradition called for it. There were many farmers, fishermen and builders as well. It is stated in the Bible that bread is the basic food for all the meals, (John 6:9). There were also goat cheese and wine, as well as olives. Most people were literate. Rabbis taught in the synagogues and the language was Aramaic and Greek. There isn't much to say about travel aside from it was dangerous, and extremely difficult, though many people traveled. The way of travel was by donkey and camel or just plain afoot. I believe that daily life in the days of Jesus was probably fairly simple. I believe that Jesus truly molded that time period. So many people were influenced to follow Jesus and be like Jesus. So many people wanted to honor Jesus and we forget that many just adored him. It wasn't until the end that people turned their backs and I believe this to be this way because men that were higher up and held the “power” would starve and punish those that believed in the teachings of Christ. I feel that contrary to our thoughts of these people being poor “per say”; they weren't poor at all. I believe that we overlook how much we have evolved and in reality, the life for people of that time period is not much different than the life of the average person in this current time period. I think people adapted to their surrounding and availability to goods, just as we do now. I do however believe in the research that many of the oils of that time period were precious commodities and used primarily for wealthy and “well – to do”. This sets

the significance of Jesus being anointed on many occasions by the precious oils. Because I found the information so interesting, I will give more than three examples of how the oils were used in this time period. There are actually twelve oils listed in the bible! **Aloe** is listed in the Bible as a “symbol of abundance and provision”, an incense, a perfume and burial ointment for Christ. **Cassia** of the Bible was more like today’s cinnamon. It is listed as an anointing oil, a perfume and precious commodities. **Cedarwood** is introduced as the most common wood for ceremonies, representing cleansing and purification. The Bible has it listed as a ceremonial tool used for cleansing leprosy, a perfume, symbolizing abundance and provision, security, stability, and building. **Cypress**



is a symbol of strength and security, a building wood, symbol of prosperity and a choice of wood



for weaponry. **Frankincense** we all know as the gift in the Christmas Story. This was viewed as a precious commodity, a perfume and a holy ceremonial perfume. **Galbanum** is listed in the Bible as part of a recipe for incense, used as a holy ceremonial perfume. Little is known about it, except that it likely came from a plant in the Ferula family. **Hyssop** was found in the Bible quite often, however, it is not native to

the area of Palestine so probably not the oil that is mentioned in the Bible. The Bible does list it as part of cleansing rituals and used as the sponge given to Jesus with the sour wine at the cross. **Myrrh** is the most “decorated oil in the Bible”. This was listed as a precious commodity, anointing oil, perfume, incense, gifts of the Magi for the Christ Child, mixed with wine and given to Jesus at the cross and used in burial preparations used for Jesus’ tomb. **Myrtle** shows growth and abundance. In the Bible, this was used for wood for building ceremonial booths, and symbolized provision and protection. **Onycha** was part of a recipe for holy anointing oil. **Rose of Sharon** is referred to in a metaphorical manner, representing the “Beloved”, but this still shows how long it has been around. **Spikenard** is known as one of the more expensive perfumes the woman used to anoint Jesus in Bethany. It is listed in the Bible as a royal fragrant aroma, a prized and desired plant, and a costly ointment.



Regardless of what I have researched, feel or believe, one thing is definite. The oils are listed in the Bible and have played a significant part of history. Perhaps these oils would offer healing for you as well.