



# THEIR LEAVES *for* HEALING

*The Divine Gift of Plants That Heal*

ELIZABETH S. FLORES



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## Scriptures

Unless otherwise indicated, the scriptures are taken from the New American Standard translation of the Bible.

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## Introduction

***The earth is full of the loving kindness of  
the Lord...He spoke and it was done;...***

Psalm 33:5,9

***For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes,  
His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen,  
being understood through what has been made,  
so they are without excuse.***

Romans 1:20

***The world will never starve for want of  
wonders, but for want of wonder.***

G.K. Chesterton

I wrote this book not only to introduce Christians to the marvel of the healing power of essential oils but in the hope that it will reawaken the wonder we experience whenever we examine any aspect of the Creation. I hope it will delight not because essential oils are natural wonders but simply because essential oils exist.

There is only one way such amazing substances could have come into existence. They were created for mankind.

Some may argue that the healing compounds found in these plants evolved over time. Naturally many of the biological functions that essential oils perform for the plant help the plant species itself to survive and procreate. The fact that essential oils are antifungal and antibacterial, for instance, increases the species chances for success.

However, what advantage is it to the plant that its essential oil is effective against depression, inflammation, pain, virus, catarrh, cysts, etc., in the human body?

Some might say that there is no reason to believe that the healing qualities of essential oils were created for man. Certainly animals learn about plants

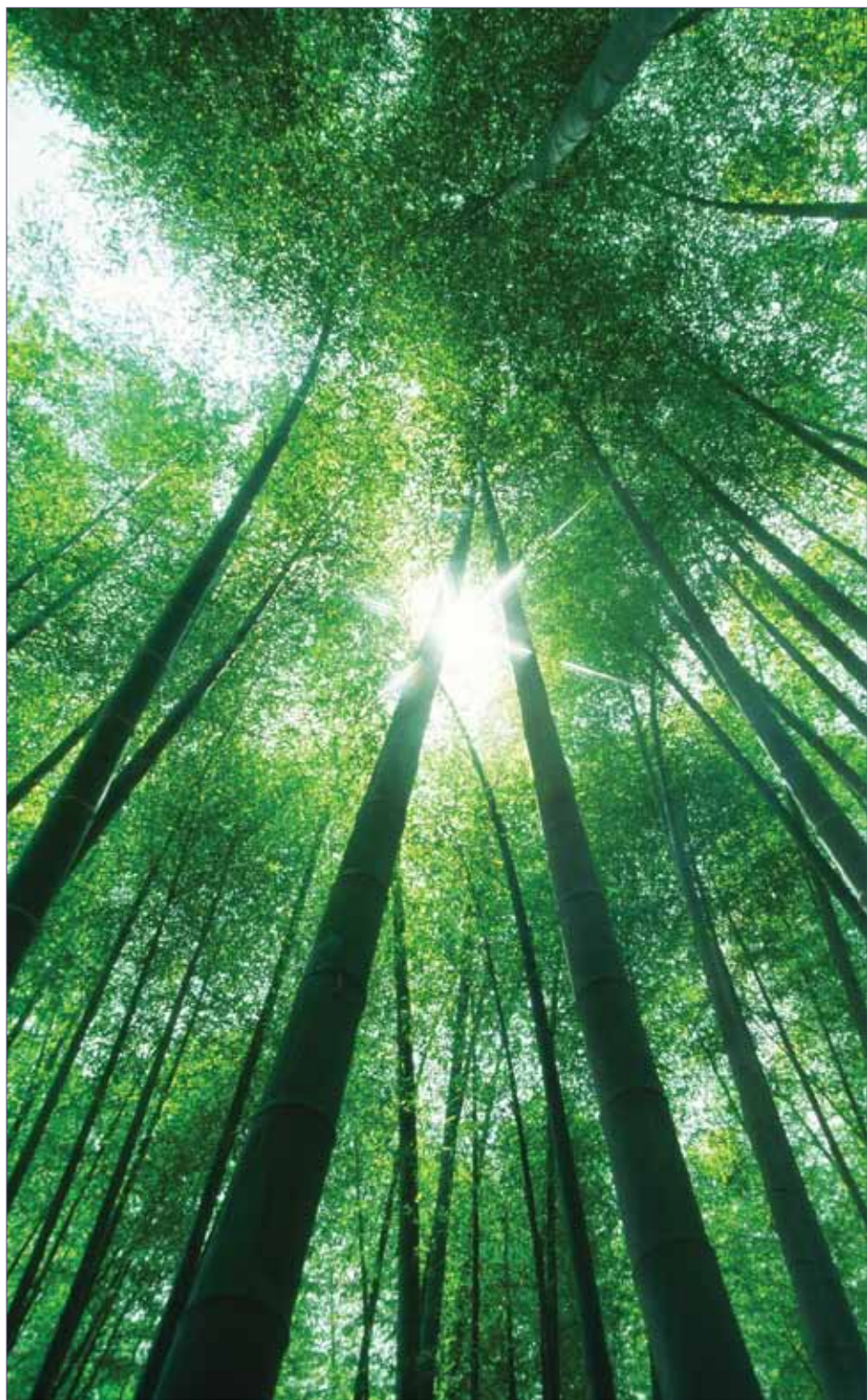
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and benefit as well. But monkeys do not possess the ability to conduct scientific inquiry nor do they envision and fabricate a distillation process to isolate the most potent form of the medicinal plants. I believe it is self-evident that essential oils are a part of the providential plan of God to provide mankind with relief from suffering, pain and disease.

***I will tell of all Thy wonders,...***

Psalm 9:1

*Elizabeth S. Flores*





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## God Is Our Provider

*Every good gift and every perfect  
gift is from above, and comes down  
from the Father of lights.*

James 1:17 NKJV

*His divine power has granted to us  
everything pertaining to life and godliness.*

2 Peter 1:3

God is our ultimate and sole provider. In Genesis 22:14, He is called *Jehovah Jireh*, Hebrew for *the LORD will provide*. When we sing the doxology, we “praise God from whom all blessings flow.” It is the Lord who gives us the power to produce wealth (Deuteronomy 8:18). He is also the provider of “every good gift and every perfect gift” (James 1:17 NKJV) and “all we need for life and godliness” (2 Peter 1:3). Most of us would agree that good health and freedom from pain and disease are good, perfect and life-giving gifts. Since it seems that we need medicine at times to sustain the gifts of life and good health, would it not be reasonable to believe that Jehovah Jireh has provided the gift of natural medicines to heal us? Many Christians think that the evidence for this can be found in creation, specifically the creation of countless varieties of medicinal herbs and plants. This book is intended to be an introduction to the divine gift of healing power found within the essential oils of medicinal herbs and plants and to the evidential intention of our Creator in providing them for us.

We know that the earth is not an insignificant speck in a meaningless universe but that it was intentionally created as an environment for us, the only creatures in the universe made in the image of God. This is self-evident. The makeup of the atmosphere, the distance from the sun, the rain (fresh water), the fertile soil, seeds, fruit, domestic animals, abundant natural resources (necessary to create tools, fire, buildings, machines, art, microchips, etc.) and numberless other attributes of this planet make the Creator’s intention abundantly clear. It is also self-evident that God formed the earth not only to provide temporal necessities for mankind but also as a means of revealing Himself. He has placed aesthetically sensitive and appreciative observers on an incredibly beautiful planet. Scripture says that what has been created leaves us without excuse if we do not thank and honor Him as God (Romans 1:19–21).





## He Has Given Us Medicinal Plants

***Their leaves will not wither, and their fruit will not fail. They will bear fruit every month because their water flows from the sanctuary, and their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing.***

Ezekiel 47:12

The New King James translation of Ezekiel 47:12 uses the word medicine instead of healing: “Their fruit will be for food and their leaves for medicine.” In either case, Ezekiel is suggesting that God provides plants for medicine or healing just as He provides plants for food. Edible plants contain nutritional components in a form that animals and humans can metabolize and use for food. In the same way, medicinal herbs and plants contain components that have remarkable

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healing properties. In His mercy and sovereignty, the Lord has provided us remedy for illness, pain and infirmities. He created herbs and plants that have the ability to relieve pain, inflammation, indigestion, infection, congestion, hormone imbalance, headaches, fever and depression, to name only a few. This is why most pharmaceuticals were originally made from compounds found in plants. Today millions of dollars are spent in the ongoing search for therapeutic compounds that may lie undiscovered in herbs and plants. Many therapeutic plants, however, contain molecules and isomers that cannot be reproduced in a laboratory.

Ultimately, there is only one Source of healing. He is Lord. When God the Son came to earth, He performed many healing miracles. Jesus taught His disciples to heal with prayer and laying on of hands. Scripture instructs that if any in the Church are sick, we are to call for the elders to come and pray and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord (James 5:14). All believers are told to lay their hands on the sick and to pray (Mark 16:18). When we pray for the sick, sometimes healing is miraculous and instantaneous. Other times God may choose to work more slowly by using a physician, medicine, His medicinal plants or a combination as His vessel or vehicle for healing.

We are blessed to live in an era of tremendous medical breakthrough and achievement. Most of us have had occasion to thank God for the relief and rescue we have received through the conventional medical community. Yet we have also become aware of the limitations and dangers inherent in some modern medical methods, particularly in the use of pharmaceuticals.

## **Pharmaceuticals and Side Effects**

Throughout known history, people have recognized the powerful healing properties of medicinal herbs and plants. In recent times, scientists have become more sophisticated in their understanding of the chemical processes by which medicinal plants and herbs benefit the human body. They have used this knowledge to create synthetic medicines by isolating and synthesizing the beneficial chemical components found in plants. The knowledge and ability needed to synthesize medications are given by God and are evidence of His mercy. But as we know, real problems are associated with taking both over-the-counter and pharmaceutical drugs. Never has this been more evident than now.

Over the past few years we have been bombarded with TV ads for pharmaceuticals featuring long lists of undesirable and dangerous side effects

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as well as ads for personal injury lawyers who want to represent people who have been harmed by these drugs. Today, more than 100,000 people die annually in the United States from *properly* administered prescription drugs. Furthermore, many of these medications are not helpful in the long run. They are ineffective for solving or curing health problems, especially chronic conditions because they usually target symptoms, not root causes. Sometimes the benefits of using a pharmaceutical outweigh the risks. Very often, however, natural and divinely created alternatives can be found among medicinal plants and herbs in their most potent form—essential oils.

## **Essential Oils Are Safe and Effective**

The most effective way to use healing herbs and plants is in the form of essential oils. Essential oils are the subtle, volatile liquids or resins from plants, shrubs, flowers, trees, roots, branches and seeds. They are the “blood” or life force of the plant and contain the highest concentration of therapeutic components. Essential oils are derived by distillation, a process that preserves all of the beneficial constituents in natural synergy, making them safe and effective for healing.

The problems that arise from the use of both over-the-counter and pharmaceutical drugs come from the process of isolating and synthesizing the active chemical components originally found in plants. In a natural environment, these active components share a complex structure with thousands of other components. This natural matrix can never be duplicated in the laboratory. Scientists cannot create a living organism. When one component is isolated and synthesized, the resulting medication can never be as safe as it was in its natural state and in its native environment. This is because some of the hundreds of the compounds found in plants balance and counteract each other. The synergy among these components as they exist in nature also gives medicinal plants powerful healing qualities. Therefore, in most cases, plant extracts can be used more safely and with better results than synthetic drugs. In other words, when properly used, the plants that God created for medicine are good and perfect gifts.

(A logical question might be, “Why do the pharmaceutical companies choose to isolate and synthesize a single component rather than use the whole plant?” The answer is that natural products cannot be patented, and patents are the financial lifeblood of pharmaceutical companies. You cannot patent the valerian herb, for example, but you can patent Valium.)



## **The Healing Power of Essential Oils**

Much like the blood of humans, essential oils are the transporters of the fundamental nutrients, vital elements and chemical constituents necessary to feed, nurture and heal the cells of all plants. Because medicinal herbs and plants were created for healing, they can serve similar functions in the human body.

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David Stewart, Ph.D., writes the following in his book *Healing Oils of the Bible*:

In serving plant functions, essential oils perform many duties. They regulate the plant growth, like hormones. They help the plant metabolize, like enzymes. They provide the basis for the plant's immune system, warding off undesirable viruses, bacteria, microbes, fungi, parasites and insects. Because God created the plants for us... their oils can serve many of the same purposes for us as they do in the plants. Thus, they can support and balance our endocrine, circulatory, digestive, nervous and reproductive systems. They can clear our sinuses and lungs to help us breathe better. They can help us metabolize our nutrients, minerals and vitamins. They can boost the natural defenses of our immune system so that we can fight off disease with our own abilities. And while they are friendly to us, they can be hostile to bacteria, viruses, parasites and fungi (David Stewart, *Healing Oils of the Bible* [Marble Hill, Mo.: Care Publications, 2003], 16).

Again, essential oils are the most concentrated form of the therapeutic components in herbs and plants. In fact, an essential oil can be from 100 to 10,000 times more potent than the herb or plant itself. Because they have an extremely small molecular size (136 amu to 404 amu [atomic mass unit]), rubbing them on the skin will cause the molecules to penetrate through the skin and into the bloodstream. In this way, the healing components in the essential oils can be defused into every cell in the body.

The treatment of infections is just one clear example of the many advantages of using essential oils instead of pharmaceuticals. We thank God for modern antibiotics, which have been saving lives for many decades now. However, the overuse of antibiotics has created a modern-day medical crisis. Since antibiotics have a relatively simple molecular structure, a relatively simple bacterial mutation will cause the bacterial strain to become resistant. Today, thousands of bacterial strains are resistant to all antibiotics. Some can actually feed on them! The media have labeled the problem of “mutated microbes” one of the most serious health crises of our time.

On the other hand, it would be virtually impossible for bacteria to mutate and become resistant to an antibacterial essential oil because essential oils have a very complex molecular structure. Dr. Taylor of the University of Austin has observed, “Essential oils present more new compounds than the chemists of the whole world could analyze in a thousand years.



We now know that they are mixtures of many powerful and therapeutic chemical constituents” (Jean Valnet, M.D., *The Practice of Aromatherapy* [Rochester, Vt.: Healing Arts Press, 1980], 26).

Yet essential oils can be as effective as antibiotics. According to the *Essential Oils Desk Reference*, published by Essential Science Publishing, when the antimicrobial ability of the essential oils of cinnamon and oregano were tested against the antibiotics penicillin and ampicillin, “[The] essential oils of cinnamon and oregano are comparable with penicillin and ampicillin in inhibitory activity against *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) and *Staphylococcus aureus* (staph)” (Brian Manwaring, Ed., 4th ed., *Essential Oils Desk Reference* [Orem, Utah: Essential Science Publishing, 2007], 516).

Antibiotics also impair our immune system. While the physician who prescribes antibiotics may have addressed one health problem, he or she



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may be creating the next. Synthetic antibiotics kill the beneficial bacteria (flora) in our intestinal tract along with the targeted pathogenic bacteria causing the infection. The beneficial flora is an important part of the immune system. When it is destroyed, the body is more vulnerable to yeast, bacterial and virus infections. Many women have experienced vaginal yeast infections after using antibiotics. Anyone who uses antibiotics may have noticed a general vulnerability to viruses or infections following treatment. This kind of trade-off is never necessary when using essential oils. Essential oils not only kill the pathogenic bacteria but also build the immune system at the same time. They destroy the pathogenic bacteria (anaerobic) and leave the beneficial bacteria (aerobic) intact. As a result, a season of serial colds, flu and infections (as in serial ear infections in children) can be avoided.

Imagine a substance that distinguishes between bacteria that makes you sick and bacteria you need to stay healthy! This is just one example of how the intelligent design of the universe is displayed in the attributes of the essential oils of medicinal plants.

(Another advantage of using essential oils is that the oils can be applied locally. One can effectively treat an infection in a finger or abscess in the gum rather than ingesting a medication that lowers the immune response of the entire body.)

## **Using Essential Oils Saves Money**

A household that knows how to use essential oils can be sure it will save money on medical bills. Having an in-home essential oil pharmacy and knowing how to use it can save many trips to the doctor's office and sometimes a trip to the hospital. A sinus or ear infection can be treated with an antibiotic essential oil. The poison of an insect bite can be neutralized. The pain of a headache can disappear. A congested head or chest can be opened. A virus can be killed before it has time to replicate. The swelling in a sprained ankle can be reduced, the pain eliminated and quick healing promoted. These are just a few examples of the benefits of moving towards reliance on what God has provided for healing.

Using essential oils also saves money because so little is needed and they have a very long shelf life. One drop of essential oil contains approximately 40 million-trillion molecules. That is a 4 followed by 19 zeros! The human body has 100 trillion cells. If we do the math, we see that one drop of





essential oil is enough to penetrate every cell in our body with 40,000 molecules. This is the reason that inhaling or applying even a small amount of essential oil can have profound effects on body, brain and emotions.

The long shelf-life can be attributed to the fact that essential oils don't spoil. In fact, since essential oils are antibacterial, antifungal and antiviral, they are used in many products as natural preservatives. Their amazing resistance to spoilage is illustrated by the fact that essential oils found in jars among the ruins of ancient Egypt were unspoiled after 3,000 years!



## Medicine for the Soul

It must be obvious to all who have been awakened by the Holy Spirit that God has created the earth not only to provide necessities for mankind but also to fill us with delight. Unlike the animals, we have the unique ability to delight in the wonders of the creation, an irrefutable indication that we are truly made in the image of God. We have the ability to experience the joy and wonder of a sunset, the song of a bird and the heavenly fragrances that fill the earth.

As creatures made in God's image, we find that just recalling the fragrance of a favorite flower, freshly cut watermelon, the woods in the fall or the desert after a rain can make our heart merry. Proverbs 27:9 says, "Oil and perfume make the heart glad." Lovely fragrances lift our heart and cause us to rejoice. They are medicine for the soul. We know this to be true, and research bears it out.

Research has shown that fragrance has a profound effect on our emotional well-being. When we smell something, it means that molecules from the

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source have entered our nostrils and have traveled to the central part of the brain. There, these molecules encounter the amygdala, an almond-shaped neuron structure that acts as the central headquarters for the limbic system and is the epicenter of our emotional brain.

Studies by Dr. Joseph LeDoux, neuroscientist, professor of neuroscience at New York Medical University and author of several books, including *The Emotional Brain*, show that aromas exert a profound effect on our emotional responses and that the limbic system affects emotion and memory more profoundly than any other sensory system. In other words, more emotional responses and recall are triggered by fragrance than by sight, touch, taste or sound. For example, a former Catholic may find himself/herself transported to a childhood church at Christmas when he/she smells frankincense. A beloved person or place might be vividly remembered when a particular fragrance is inhaled. Research also shows that some essential oils, those that have a high concentration of compounds known as sesquiterpenes, have an even more profound effect because they are capable of crossing the blood-brain barrier. (The blood-brain barrier is a protective membrane that separates circulating blood and cerebrospinal fluid to prevent certain molecules from entering the brain.)

There can be no doubt that God delighted in creating fragrances. In the book of Revelation, He compares one of His primary pleasures, the prayers of the saints, to a pleasing aroma (Revelation 5:8 and 8:3–4). God gave Moses a specific recipe for holy anointing oil and holy incense (Exodus 30:23–25, 34–36) to be used in the Tabernacle and later in the Temple of Solomon.

The Bible refers to an *oil of gladness* or an *oil of joy* in several passages (Psalm 45:7–8, Proverbs 27:9, Isaiah 61:3, Hebrews 1:9). Of course this “oil” can be received only from the Holy Spirit. However, oil may have been referenced because the Lord delights in fragrance and gave mankind essential oils not only for healing but also to gladden the heart. Some of the ancient oils of gladness, now known to help alleviate depression and produce an uplifting effect, are cassia, cedarwood, chamomile, frankincense, jasmine, myrrh, rose and rosewood. Many other essential oils have lovely fragrances.

(Please note that not all therapeutic-grade essential oils have a particularly pleasing aroma. Some are very important and useful for healing physical problems but are not necessarily delightful to the soul.)

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## Good Stewardship of Our Bodies

As Christians, we are called to reverently and responsibly steward whatever God has given us. We are no longer our own, but His (1 Corinthians 6:19–20). Each of us and all we possess are His. So too, God has given us bodies to steward. This marvelous machine, this body human, in which God Himself chose to indwell in the incarnation, is called a temple in Scripture. It is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and it is the means we have been given to accomplish the purposes of God during our time on earth.

It seems that many Christians have renounced responsible stewardship of their bodies and their health. They live lifestyles that are not conducive to good health and then expect and rely entirely on a doctor to fix them when health problems crop up. They dutifully have the surgery or take harmful pharmaceuticals without investigating lifestyle changes and God-given alternatives that might make such remedies unnecessary.

This booklet has been written with the fervent hope that *Christians will begin to educate themselves on the wonderful benefits of using the medicines God has provided for them in His creation*. God has not left us without remedy for our soul. Neither has He left us without remedy for our bodies. Many members of the New Age movement, Eastern religious sects and other cults avail themselves of the benefits of medicinal plants. It seems that because of this, some Christians are running in the opposite direction rather than taking dominion, as we were commanded to do. The members of cults use medicinal plants and herbs without true understanding and are often strong, healthy and well able to carry out their affairs. Surely the people of God, to whom He has given a clear understanding of creation, should be able to recognize what has been created to give them the strength and health needed to advance the Kingdom of God.

“Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it, and rule” (Gen. 1:28). We have heard these words so often that we no longer feel their breathtaking force. God commanded two people, a man and a woman, to be king and queen of the whole creation and to produce a worldwide race of kings and queens to rule the creation. They and their children were to learn more and more about God’s good creation, to discover ever new uses of the things God had made, to bring the world more and more completely into service of God and man (Peter J. Leithart, *The Kingdom and the Power* [Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 1993], 25).







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## An Ounce of Prevention

Of course the best stewardship for our bodies is practiced when we adopt a lifestyle that prevents health problems. Essential oils are arguably the best preventive agents on the planet. They are powerful antioxidants; they cleanse the body (the lymph system, the digestive system, the blood, etc.); they kill fungi, viruses, pathogenic bacteria and parasites; they strengthen the immune system, oxygenate the cells, keep blood sugar regulated, dissolve the beginnings of cysts, tumors and cataracts, regulate blood viscosity, balance hormones, relax strained muscles, improve circulation, improve lung function, clear sinus passages, reduce stress and create a sense of well-being. That's a lot of prevention, and these are just a few of the ways essential oils keep the body well.

Perhaps more Christians would use essential oils if they understood more about the efficacy of these oils and how to use them.

## How Are Essential Oils Used?

Essential oils can be used in several easy and convenient ways. The most common method is to apply them on the skin. This external application will also induce internal absorption. Again, essential oils comprise extremely small molecules and thus easily penetrate the skin and blood vessels and enter the bloodstream. Research shows that when an essential oil is rubbed anywhere on the skin, it can be detected in virtually every cell in the body within 21 minutes. Essential oils will even penetrate toenails or fingernails to attack fungus or pass through the bones of the skull to help a sinus infection.

The small molecular size of essential oils also makes them very volatile or aromatic. Volatility means that they evaporate easily or that the molecules are readily released into the air. This is why essential oils are so fragrant and are so easily diffused into the air. Diffusing essential oils can have very pleasant and very beneficial effects. Essential oils are, without a doubt, the best and most effective air purifiers on earth. They don't just cover up odors and pathogens; they remove them. They bind to odors, fungus, bacteria, heavy metals and other toxins and drop them out of the air. Furthermore, essential oils are beneficial not only for what they take out of the air but also for what they add to it. Breathing the molecules is an especially effective delivery system to aid respiratory, congestion and sinus problems or just to uplift the soul.



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You can diffuse essential oils in several ways. One method is to use a nebulizing or ultrasonic diffuser for your home. This method does not heat the oils. This is important, as heat can cause therapeutic-grade oil to lose some of its potency.

Another method is to simply put a drop or two in the palm of one hand. Rub both hands together to create warmth. Then cup the lower part of the face, using both hands to cover the nose and mouth, and inhale deeply. The amazing potency of pure therapeutic-grade essential oils can make the effect almost startling. Essential oils can also be added to a spray bottle filled with purified water. Mist your personal environment at the office, on the airplane or at a ball game. (Oil of peppermint mist is extremely refreshing on a hot day and will cool you down fast.)

Therapeutic-grade essential oils—*but ONLY therapeutic-grade oils*—can also be taken internally. (See *Not All Essential Oils Are Created Equal* on page 50.) There are several ways to ingest essential oil: One is to put a few drops in purified drinking water. Another is to put a drop or two in a small amount of honey, blue agave or vegetable oil. A few drops of essential oils can also be used in gelatin capsules filled with castor oil.

At this point you may be wondering about how to choose the best therapeutic-grade oil and about the best method of application to help a particular health concern or to maintain wellness. The answer is two words: reference guide. Get a good reference guide. Essential oils reference guides contain both an A to Z reference of essential oils and an A to Z guide to symptoms and health concerns. You can look up a particular oil and read about what to use it for, or you can look up the symptom or health concern and find out what oil or oils are recommended and how to use them. As you begin to integrate essential oils into everyday life, your knowledge will grow very quickly. Even the little children in most families that use essential oils know which oils to use for a bug bite, burn or scrape and how to use them. (For more information on reference guides, please call us or visit our website.)



## Healing Oils of Scripture

Essential oils were used for centuries by the people of ancient civilizations not only as medicine but also in religious ceremonies, for perfume, cleansing, burial and childbirth and as monetary exchange. At the time of Christ, frankincense oil was considered to be more valuable than gold. Yet essential oils are as modern as the new scientific methods now being employed to discover the secrets of their efficacy. Recently, in a time when the “better living through chemistry” motto of the 1950s is being discredited, the amazing healing powers of essential oils are being rediscovered.

For the health professionals who have regularly worked with quality essential oils on patients, it has become very clear that here is a powerful life force inherent in these substances, which gives them an unmatched ability to communicate and interact with the cells of the human body (Brian Manwaring, Ed., 4th ed., *Essential Oils Desk Reference* [Orem, Utah: Essential Science Publishing, 2007], xi).

Potentially as many essential oils exist as there are plant species. However, over the centuries the Lord has revealed the identities of the medicinal or therapeutic herbs and plants and how to use them for prevention and healing. Healing plants are not necessarily limited to those found in Scripture, but the Bible is a good place to start. What follows is a brief description of twelve of the medicinal plants that are mentioned in Scripture.

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## Aloe/Sandalwood (*santalum album*)

**Hebrew:** *ahalim / ahaloth*     **Greek:** *aloe*

*How fair are your tents, O Jacob, your dwellings, O Israel! Like valleys that stretch out, like gardens beside the river, like aloes planted by the LORD, like cedars beside the waters.* (Numbers 24:5–6)

*You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness more than Your companions. All Your garments are scented with myrrh and aloes and cassia.* (Psalm 45:7–8 NKJV)

The Hebrew words for aloe (*ahalim and aholoth*) refer to an oil imported from India that was distilled from the sandalwood tree. The Greek word *aloe* means noble. In Numbers 24:5–6, the aloe (sandalwood) and cedar trees appear to represent strength and beauty.

In Psalm 45:7–8, aloe is listed as one of the oils of gladness. This psalm is one of four scriptures where oils are associated with joy, gladness and rejoicing. The other references are found in Proverbs 27:9 (“Oil and perfume make the heart glad.”), Isaiah 61:3 (NKJV) (“The Spirit of the LORD is upon me... to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning.”) and Hebrews 1:9, which quotes Psalm 45:7–8. In these scriptures, oil is chosen as a means of imparting joy, gladness and rejoicing that only God Himself can give to the human spirit. The Bible tells us that joy is found in the presence of the Lord: “In Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore” (Psalm 16:11 NKJV).

It is interesting to note that oils of gladness, such as aloe, myrrh, cassia, frankincense, cedarwood and rose of Sharon, have been found to contain components that produce an uplifting and positive emotional effect.

**Source for Essential Oil**—Steam distilled from the wood of the tree.

**Ancient Uses**—Sandalwood was listed in Dioscoride’s *De Materia Medica* (AD 78), the first and only authoritative guide to medicines and a standard reference for herbal treatments in Europe for over 1,700 years. Imported from India, sandalwood was thought to restore health, revitalize skin and increase serenity and spiritual awareness. It was used for centuries as medicine, for skin care and healing and to enhance meditation. It was considered to be a sacred oil in many ancient cultures. The ancient Egyptians used sandalwood for embalming.



**Medical Properties**—Sandalwood contains a high concentration (90%) of remarkable chemical compounds called sesquiterpenes. The sesquiterpenes allow the essential oil of sandalwood to cross the blood–brain barrier and stimulate the limbic region of the brain (the center of memory and emotions), promoting mental clarity and producing an uplifting and calming effect. (Sandalwood is truly an oil of gladness.) Sandalwood enhances meditation and restores emotional balance. Sesquiterpenes also stimulate the pineal gland, which produces melatonin, a hormone that induces deep, restful sleep. Melatonin is a powerful immune system stimulant as well.

Sandalwood is renowned as an ingredient in skin care products because of its ability to regenerate, restore and revitalize damaged and aged skin. It has also been shown to regenerate bone cartilage.

Sandalwood is antiseptic, antimicrobial, antitumoral and antiviral. It is a sedative, an aphrodisiac, an astringent, an antidepressant and an immune stimulant. It supports the cardiovascular, endocrine and female reproductive systems.

**Modern Uses**—Catarrh, chronic bronchitis, chronic diarrhea, circulation, coughs, cystitis, depression, hemorrhoids, hiccoughs, impotence, insomnia, lumbago, lymphatic system, menstrual problems, nervous tension, sciatic nerves, skin conditions (acne, infections, wrinkles, scars), tuberculosis, urinary tract infections, viral infections (herpes simplex, herpes zoster, cold sores, human papaloma virus, etc.).

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## Cassia (*cinnamomum cassia*)

**Hebrew:** *qiddah / qetsioth*    **Greek:** *kasia*

*Take also for yourself the finest of spices: of flowing myrrh five hundred shekels, and of fragrant cinnamon half as much, two hundred and fifty, and of fragrant cane two hundred and fifty, and of cassia five hundred, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and of olive oil a hin. You shall make of these a holy anointing oil, a perfume mixture, the work of a perfumer; it shall be a holy anointing oil. (Exodus 30:23–25)*

*From the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores; they have not been closed or bound up, or soothed with ointment. (Isaiah 1:6 NKJV)*

Cassia is one of two principal ingredients in the holy anointing oil, myrrh being the other. (One of the lesser ingredients, cane, is aromatic calamus.) The fragrance from the inner bark of a cassia tree somewhat resembles cinnamon, yet it is fresher, sweeter (flowery), softer and generally more uplifting. Cassia was known as “oriental cinnamon” in the ancient world. Since the fragrance of myrrh is subtle and tends to fix or preserve other fragrances, we can surmise that cassia was a strong aromatic influence in the holy anointing oil.

Scripture refers to cassia in an indirect manner as a healing oil. In Isaiah 1:6, we read that “wounds, bruises and sores” were not “soothed with ointment.” It may be assumed that ointment would have soothed the bruises and sores had it been applied. In this instance, the Hebrew word for ointment implies a combination of olive oil with either cinnamon or cassia, both of which are now known to be highly antiseptic.

Cassia is also one of the oils listed in Psalm 45:7–8 as an oil of gladness. All of the oils listed in this psalm have been found to contain components that produce an uplifting and positive emotional effect.

**Source of Essential Oil**—Steam distilled from the bark of the tree.

**Ancient Uses**—Cassia is mentioned in one of the oldest medical records in existence, the *Ebers Papyrus*. Dating from the sixteenth century BC, the *Ebers Papyrus* is an ancient Egyptian list of 877 prescriptions. Cassia is native to India and was probably imported from there. It was prepared from peeled bark, as the Hebrew word for cassia (*qiddah*) means

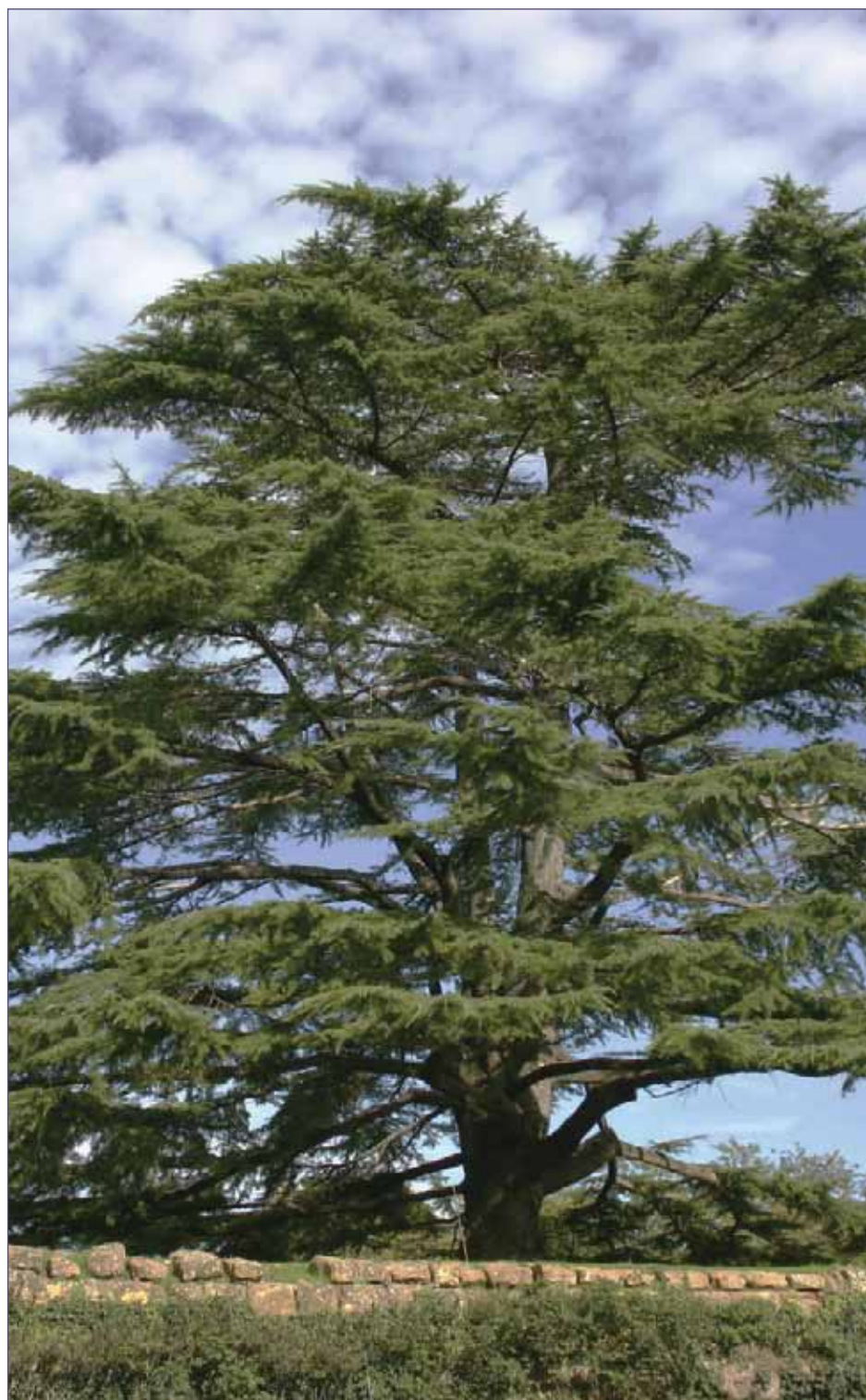


split. As mentioned, cassia was used by Moses as an ingredient in the holy anointing oil. It was thought by doctors in ancient times to cure snakebites, the common cold and kidney trouble. It was considered valuable enough to be used as an article of commerce (Ezekiel 27:19).

**Medical Properties**—Cassia is antibacterial, anticoagulant, antifungal, anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, antiviral and an immune system builder. It is supportive of the body's natural defenses and is mood elevating.

**Modern Uses**—Atherosclerosis, arteriosclerosis, cataracts, colds, colic, diarrhea, dyspepsia, fungal infections (ringworm, candida), flatulence, kidney problems, nausea, reproductive problems, rheumatism.







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## Cedarwood (*cedrus atlantica*)

**Hebrew:** erez    **Greek:** kedros

*As for the house which King Solomon built for the LORD, its length was sixty cubits... Then he built the walls of the house on the inside with boards of cedar; from the floor of the house to the ceiling... And he built twenty cubits on the rear part of the house with boards of cedar from the floor to the ceiling; he built them for it on the inside as an inner sanctuary, even as the most holy place... And there was cedar on the house within, carved in the shape of gourds and open flowers; all was cedar; there was no stone seen... He also overlaid the altar with cedar. (1 Kings 6:2,15,16,18,20)*

*I will open rivers on the bare heights, and springs in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land fountains of water. I will put the cedar in the wilderness. (Isaiah 41:18–19)*

*He will blossom like the lily, and he will take root like the cedars of Lebanon. His shoots will sprout, and his beauty will be like the olive tree, and his fragrance like the cedars of Lebanon. (Hosea 14:5–6)*

Solomon paneled the walls of the Temple, including the most holy place, with cedarwood. The altar was overlaid with cedar as well. While it would be difficult to envision the splendor of Solomon's Temple, we can at least have an idea of what it smelled like. The deep, rich, sweet fragrance of cedarwood would have permeated the Temple's interior.

As we know, Solomon asked God for wisdom, and God was pleased to grant him the gift he needed to rule Israel.

Solomon's renowned wisdom was from God. Yet it is interesting to note that Solomon, the Levitical priesthood and all Israel worshiped in a place where they were inhaling a fragrant oil that modern research has shown contains high levels of a chemical component that crosses the blood-brain barrier and increases the ability to think clearly. Cedarwood oil also enhances awareness helpful to effective prayer and meditation.

In Isaiah 41:19–20, cedarwood is associated with the bountiful provision that God supplies His people, creating a paradise where there was once wilderness. In Hosea 14:5–7, the mighty cedars of Lebanon are used as a representation of the strength and beauty (beautiful fragrance) of Israel

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when the Lord restores and redeems it. Throughout Scripture, the cedar is used as a symbol for strength, majesty and beauty.

**Source of Essential Oil**—Steam distilled from bark of the trees.

**Ancient Uses**—Essential oil of cedarwood may be the first and most ancient of the distilled oils, inasmuch as it is mentioned in a Babylonian tablet dating 1800 BC. The Chinese, Sumerians and Egyptians were using it for disinfecting and hygienic purposes more than 5,000 years ago. (Modern studies have shown that cedarwood is, in fact, highly antiseptic and antibacterial.) In the Bible, cedarwood was used in ritual cleansing after touching a dead body or anything else considered unclean. It was also used to cleanse lepers (Leviticus 14:3). Cedarwood was used throughout antiquity for medicine, cosmetics, healing skin problems and embalming. It was also used for its calming effects, to enhance mental clarity and as an insect repellent.

**Medical Properties**—Like the oil of sandalwood, the essential oil of cedarwood has high concentrations of sesquiterpenes. In fact, it has the highest concentration in any known substance (98%). This is significant because, as stated previously, sesquiterpenes have the ability to pass through the blood–brain barrier. When cedarwood essential oil is inhaled, it oxygenates all the cells in the body, but especially those in the brain, by way of nasal passages and the olfactory nerves. Molecules that have the ability to carry oxygen to the brain promote mental clarity. Essential oils that have high concentrations of sesquiterpenes are known as cerebral stimulants. Cedarwood oil is at the top of that list and may in fact help prevent senility and Alzheimer’s disease.

Terry Friedmann’s [M.D., M.D.(H)] extensive research using the essential oil of cedarwood to treat ADD, ADHD and autism has led to breakthrough discoveries. (Dr. Friedmann is a board–certified medical doctor who is considered to be a pioneer and leader in holistic medicine.)

The high levels of sesquiterpenes in cedarwood oil also stimulate the limbic region of the brain, the center of the emotions, producing an uplifting, calming effect. Cedarwood oil stimulates the pineal gland, which releases melatonin, a hormone that is effective for emotional healing and enhancement of deep sleep. It is also antifungal, anti–infectious, antibacterial and antiseptic. It acts as an astringent, a diuretic, a lymphatic stimulant and an insect repellent. Cedarwood oil can be used for cleansing and purification.



**Modern Uses**— ADD and ADHD (attention deficit disorders) in children, anger, anxiety, arteriosclerosis, arthritis, bronchitis, cellulite, congestion, coughs, cystitis, dandruff, hair loss (alopecia areata), lymphatic congestion, nervous tension, respiratory disorders, skin disease and disorders (acne, eczema, psoriasis), sinusitis, tuberculosis, urinary tract infections (cystitis), water retention.

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## Cypress/Gopher wood (*cupressus sempervirens*)

**Hebrew:** *tirzah*     **Greek:** *kyparissos*

*Then God said to Noah, ... 'Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make the ark with rooms, and shall cover it inside and out with pitch.'* (Genesis 6:13–14)

*The glory of Lebanon will come to you, the juniper, the box tree, and the cypress together; to beautify the place of My sanctuary; and I shall make the place of My feet glorious.* (Isaiah 60:13)

According to scholars, the gopher wood that Noah used to build the ark in obedience to the Lord's instructions was probably cypress. Cypress was also used in Solomon's Temple (I Kings 5 and 6). In Isaiah, it is included among the trees that are the glory of Lebanon, timber that will be brought to Jerusalem to beautify the sanctuary of the Lord and make it glorious.

Cypress may have been used to build the ark and the Temple because of its durability, beauty and strength. Cypress is durable because the oil in its wood resists decay when exposed to moisture. Its attractive golden and reddish–brown hue lends beauty to the grain, and its sweet, deep evergreen fragrance is extremely pleasant. In the ancient world, its oil was used to help circulation of the blood, and like blood, it was symbolic of life. In fact, the name of the species, *sempervirens*, means everlasting or always green.

**Source of Essential Oil**—Steam distilled from the branches of the tree.

**Ancient Uses**—Essential oil of cypress is mentioned in a Babylonian tablet dating 1800 BC. It was considered to be highly medicinal in ancient Egypt and in the rest of the Middle East. Cypress, as mentioned, was the oil used most in antiquity for the circulatory system. It was also used for its benefits to the urinary system and for other aspects of health pertaining to excessive loss of fluids, such as perspiration, diarrhea and menstrual flow. The ancient Chinese valued cypress for its benefits to the liver and respiratory system.

**Medical Properties**—Cypress contains a high concentration of chemical compounds called monoterpenes, which have the ability to reprogram cellular memory with correct information, thus promoting permanent



healing at the cellular level. Cypress also promotes production of leukocytes (white blood cells), which boost the body's natural defenses.

Today, cypress is still known to be supportive of the cardiovascular system and to strengthen blood capillary walls. According to Dietrich Gumbel, Ph.D., German biologist and founder of the new area of inquiry called "ecology of the body," cypress strengthens the heart and improves and increases circulation. Cypress is antibacterial, anti-infectious, antimicrobial, antispasmodic, antiseptic and mucolytic. It is an astringent, a diuretic and is refreshing and relaxing. It strengthens connective tissue, improves lung circulation and acts as a lymphatic and prostate decongestant. It is supportive to women during menstruation and menopause. Cypress is also emotionally beneficial. It helps to heal emotional trauma, eases feelings of loss and helps to create a sense of security and grounding.

**Modern Uses**—Arthritis, asthma, bleeding gums, bronchitis, cellulite, circulatory problems, colds, spasmodic coughs, diabetes, diarrhea, edema, energy (low), fever, gallbladder, hemorrhages and nosebleeds, hemorrhoids, influenza, insomnia, laryngitis, liver disorders, menopausal problems, menstrual pain, muscular cramps, nervous tension, ovarian cysts, pancreas insufficiencies, intestinal parasites, pleurisy, pulmonary disorders, rheumatism, scar tissue, skin conditions, spasms, throat problems, tuberculosis, varicose veins, water retention, whooping cough, wounds.





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## Frankincense (*boswellia carteri*)

**Hebrew:** lebonah    **Greek:** olibanum

*Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Take for yourself spices, stacte and onycha and galbanum, spices with pure frankincense; there shall be an equal part of each. And with it you shall make incense, a perfume, the work of a perfumer, salted, pure, and holy. And you shall beat some of it very fine, and put part of it before the testimony in the tent of meeting, where I shall meet with you; it shall be most holy to you.’ (Exodus 30:34–36)*

*Then you will see and be radiant, and your heart will thrill and rejoice; ... the wealth of the nations will come to you... They will bring gold and frankincense, and will bear good news of the praises of the LORD. (Isaiah 60:5–6)*

*And they came into the house and saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell down and worshiped Him; and opening their treasures they presented to Him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. (Matthew 2:11)*

Frankincense is one of the ingredients in the holy incense formula given to Moses by the Lord and recorded in the book of Exodus. The Israelites were instructed to burn this incense in the Tabernacle when the Lord would meet with them. They were still making incense offerings at the time of Zacharias. Luke 1:10 says the people were praying outside when Zacharias went into the Temple to make the incense offering. Zacharias was making this offering when the angel of the Lord appeared to him to announce the birth of his son, John the Baptist. Since that time, the intriguingly deep, musky, exotic and mystical fragrance of frankincense has been present in houses of God, from medieval cathedrals to the Orthodox churches of today.

Approximately 700 years before Jesus was born, the prophet Isaiah prophesied about the gifts that the mysterious Magi would bring to the Christ Child (Isaiah 60:5–6). Frankincense, a royal and precious substance in the ancient world, was known as the oil of kings. At the time of Christ it was more valuable than pure gold. It was used to anoint the newborn sons of kings and priests, which may have been why it was brought to the baby Jesus. The Magi may have been proclaiming the identity of this babe. Truly, frankincense was an appropriate gift for the King of kings.

Frankincense is very prominent in the Bible. In all, the Bible makes 52 references to it, including references to “incense,” which is translated from the Hebrew and Greek as frankincense. Frankincense refers either to



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frankincense itself or to a mixture in which it was one of the ingredients. The name, frankincense is derived from the medieval French word for “real incense.”

Frankincense trees will grow only in the southern peninsula of Arabia or the Somalian deserts of northeast Africa (both have the same climate, latitude and soil conditions) and the resin/gum has been traded in these areas for more than 5,000 years. It takes approximately 100 years for a frankincense tree to mature to the point where the white resin/gum can produce the highest-quality essential oil. The Hebrew word for frankincense, *lebannah*, means whiteness, referring to the color of the resin/gum.

**Source of Essential Oil**—Steam distilled from the resin/gum from the trunks and limbs of the tree.

**Ancient Uses**— Frankincense is mentioned in one of the oldest medical records known, the *Ebers Papyrus*. Dating from the sixteenth century BC, the record is an ancient Egyptian list of 877 prescriptions. Frankincense was well-known during the time of Christ for its healing powers and was considered to be a universal cure-all. One Egyptian text states that frankincense is good for everything “from gout to a broken head.” This was the ancient Egyptian way of saying good for everything from head to toe.

As stated, frankincense was used in the formula given to Moses for holy incense. It was considered a holy incense and holy anointing oil throughout the Middle East and has been used in religious ceremonies for thousands of years. It was used to enhance meditation and elevate spiritual consciousness. In fact, the Egyptian word for frankincense (*sntr* [sic]) means “that which makes God known.”

Since it was rare, considered to be a holy oil and used to treat every conceivable ill, frankincense was extremely costly. Only those with great wealth and abundance possessed it—another reason it was known as the oil of kings. (Frankincense was found in the tomb of the ancient Egyptian King Tutankhamen, who died about 3,300 years ago.)

**Medical Properties**—Frankincense is another oil (along with sandalwood and cedarwood) that contains sesquiterpenes. It too, effectively penetrates the blood-brain barrier and has an uplifting and mood-elevating effect. Frankincense is an oil of gladness and has been effectively used as an antidepressant. It creates emotional balance, enhances spiritual awareness and is useful for meditation.



Again, sesquiterpenes stimulate the pineal gland, which produces melatonin, a hormone that not only induces deep sleep but also is a powerful immune stimulant and antitumoral agent. Recently frankincense (specifically boswellic acid, the primary active compound in frankincense) has been studied for its anticancer effects in an aggressive form of human breast cancer that is highly resistant to chemotherapy.

As with cypress, frankincense contains high levels of monoterpenes, which reprogram cellular memory to promote permanent healing. Frankincense builds the immune system by stimulating the production of white corpuscles and increasing the activity of leukocytes to dramatically enhance the ability of the body to defend itself against infection.

Frankincense helps to maintain normal cellular regeneration and functions as an expectorant and muscle-relaxing agent. Frankincense has also long been prescribed for its haemostatic (ability to stop bleeding) properties. It is anticatarrhal, anti-infectious, antiseptic and sedative.

**Modern Uses**— Allergies, asthma, brain damage, bronchitis, cancer, carbuncles, catarrh, colds, coughs, depression, diarrhea, diphtheria, headaches, head injuries, hemorrhaging, herpes, high blood pressure, lowered immune response, inflammation, insect bites, jaundice, laryngitis, meningitis, nervous condition, pneumonia, prostate problems, respiratory infections and problems, scarring, sciatic pain, sores, staph, strep, stress, tension, tonsillitis, tuberculosis, typhoid, typhus, ulcers, warts, wounds.

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## Galbanum (*ferula gummosa*)

**Hebrew:** *chelbanah / khelbnah*

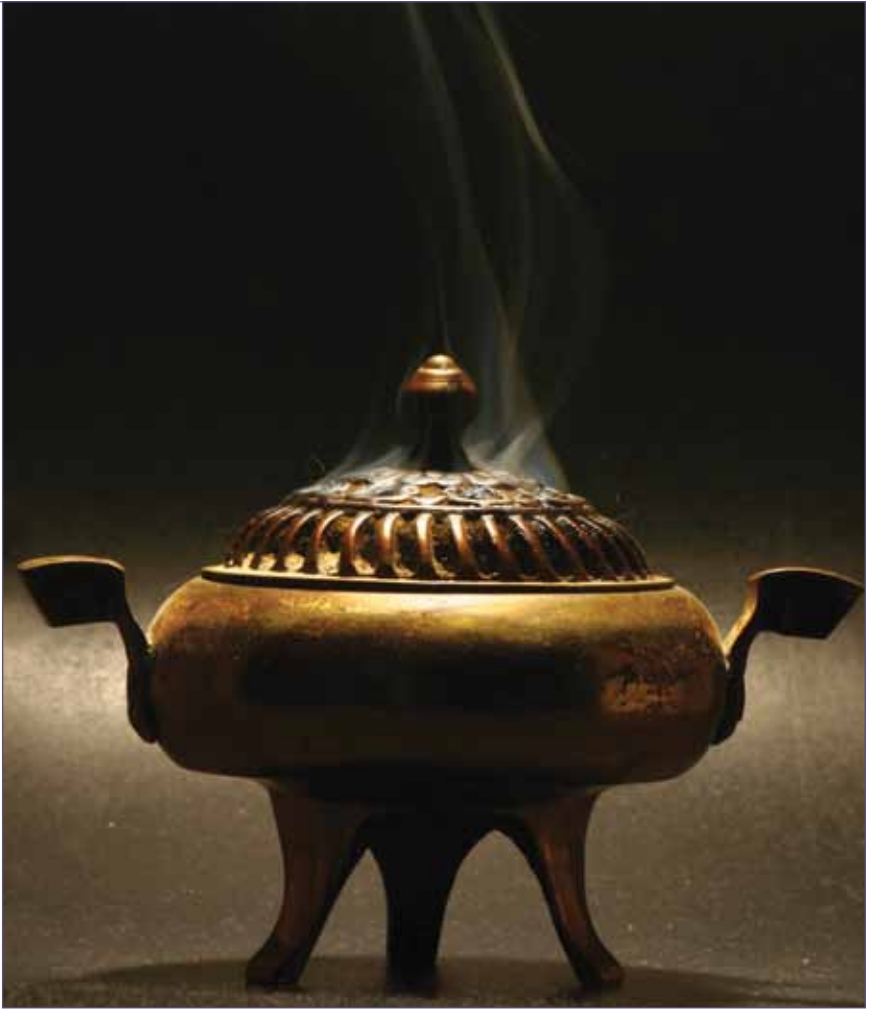
*Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Take for yourself spices, stacte and onycha and galbanum, spices with pure frankincense; there shall be an equal part of each. And with it you shall make incense, a perfume, the work of a perfumer, salted, pure, and holy. And you shall beat some of it very fine, and put part of it before the testimony in the tent of meeting, where I shall meet with you; it shall be most holy to you.’ (Exodus 30:34–36)*

Galbanum and onycha are specifically mentioned in Scripture only once, as ingredients required by the Lord in the holy incense. Galbanum is a perennial herb that is closely related to the giant fennel and has a similar aroma. Used extensively in the ancient world as an ingredient in incense, it is native to Iraq and was probably imported from Persia (Iraq) or India. *Chelbanah*, the Hebrew word for galbanum, means “richness” or “fatness.” This may have been a reference to its rich, bittersweet, grassy/woody fragrance. It is known to have a spiritually uplifting yet grounding effect and would certainly give the holy incense an entirely unique aroma. Galbanum may also have been chosen as an ingredient in the holy incense because of its ability to act as a stabilizer.

**Source of Essential Oil**—Steam distilled from resin/gum from stems and branches of the plant.

**Ancient Uses**—Galbanum is said to have been a highly valued medicine by Hippocrates. Dioscorides, an ancient Roman historian, records that galbanum was regularly used for its pain-relieving (analgesic), antispasmodic, sedative and diuretic properties. Babylonian, Egyptian, Greek and Arabian sources also tell us that galbanum was primarily used for pain relief, spasms and cramps. It was also used for treating wounds, inflammation, skin disorders, embalming and childbirth and as an ingredient in perfume and incense. As mentioned, it was believed to be spiritually uplifting and to enhance meditation and was one of the ingredients given to Moses for the holy incense.

**Medical Properties**—Like cypress and frankincense, galbanum has a high concentration of monoterpenes. Of the three, galbanum has the highest concentration. It is very effective at promoting permanent healing. It is especially rich in a monoterpene called camphene, which



kills viruses and cleanses the circulatory system. Galbanum builds the immune system and is analgesic, anti-infectious, antimicrobial, restorative, antiseptic, anticonvulsant/antispasmodic and anti-inflammatory. It is a circulatory stimulant, a diuretic and an expectorant and is emotionally balancing and grounding. Again, it can increase spiritual awareness and enhance meditation.

**Modern Uses**—Acne, anxiety, asthma, boils, bronchitis, catarrh, chronic coughs, poor circulation, cramps, cuts, digestive problems, flatulence, swollen glands, indigestion, inflammation, kidney problems, muscular aches and pains, nervous tension, rheumatism, skin problems (scar tissue, wrinkles), spasms, stress, virus, wounds.

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## Hyssop (*hyssopus officinalis*)

**Hebrew:** eboz     **Greek:** hussopos

*For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses to all the people according to the Law, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people. (Hebrews 9:19)*

*Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. (Psalm 51:7)*

In Hebrews 9:19, the author recalls that the first covenant, the Covenant of the Law, required shed blood, as did the second, the Covenant of Grace. Blood is required to cleanse from sin, to purify and to ratify sacred covenants. The blood required in the Old Testament was efficacious because it foreshadowed and was linked to the blood Jesus would shed on the Cross as the atonement for all time. The blood is the reason the Lord passed over the Israelites and the reason we have been redeemed.

In Hebrews 9:19, hyssop is mentioned along with blood as part of the cleansing ceremony. The Lord specified that hyssop was to be used in association with the blood on several significant occasions: the blood of the paschal lamb was to be painted on the Hebrew doorposts with a hyssop branch at Passover (Exodus 12:22), blood and hyssop were to be used in the ceremonial cleansing of skin disease (Leviticus 14:4–6, 49–51) and for the red-heifer offering for the purification of sins (Numbers 19:6).

In Scripture, hyssop is associated not only with blood but also, like blood, with purification, cleansing and atonement. David refers to hyssop when he writes one of most beloved psalms in the Bible. In Psalm 51:7, he repents for his sin with Bathsheba and asks to be cleansed and restored to fellowship with the Holy Spirit: “Purify me with hyssop.”

Hyssop may have been associated with purification and cleansing in a spiritual sense because of its temporal purifying and cleansing attributes. It was used medicinally for almost a millennium for its antiseptic properties and for opening the respiratory system. When inhaled, the warm, pungent aroma acts as a decongestant. Both the Hebrew (eboz) and Greek (hussopos) words for hyssop mean “aromatic plant.”



**Source for Essential Oil**—Steam distilled from the stems and leaves of the plant.

**Ancient Uses**—Hyssop was thought to be spiritually cleansing, to repel evil spirits and to focus the mind in meditation. It was also used to cleanse and purify, for respiratory relief and as a decongestant and an expectorant.

**Medical Properties**—Today we know that hyssop is highly antiseptic. It is also mucolytic, anti-inflammatory, antiviral, antibacterial and antiparasitic. It is a decongestant and regulates lipid metabolism. It is thought to stimulate creativity and meditation and to be emotionally balancing.

Because, like cypress, frankincense and galbanum, hyssop has high levels of monoterpenes, it promotes permanent healing at the cellular level. Hyssop metabolizes fat and increases perspiration (detoxification).

**Modern Uses**—Addictions and destructive habits, anxiety, arthritis, asthma, circulatory disorders, parasites (expelling worms), respiratory infections/congestion, sore throats, viral infections, wounds.





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## Myrrh (*commiphora myrrha*)

**Hebrew:** mor    **Greek:** muron / smurna / smurnizo

*Take also for yourself the finest of spices: of flowing myrrh five hundred shekels, and of fragrant cinnamon half as much, two hundred and fifty, and of fragrant cane two hundred and fifty, and of cassia five hundred, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and of olive oil a hin. And you shall make of these a holy anointing oil, a perfume mixture, the work of a perfumer; it shall be a holy anointing oil. (Exodus 30:23–25)*

*Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Take for yourself spices, stacte and onycha and galbanum, spices with pure frankincense; there shall be an equal part of each. And with it you shall make incense, a perfume, the work of a perfumer, salted, pure, and holy. And you shall beat some of it very fine, and put part of it before the testimony in the tent of meeting, where I shall meet with you; it shall be most holy to you.’ (Exodus 30:34–36)*

*I arose to open to my beloved; and my hands dripped with myrrh, and my fingers with liquid myrrh, on the handles of the bolt. (Song of Solomon 5:5)*

*And they came into the house and saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell down and worshiped Him; and opening their treasures they presented to Him gifts of gold and frankincense, and myrrh. (Matthew 2:11)*

From the holy anointing oil to the gifts brought to the Christ Child, myrrh is mentioned more often (143 times) than any other aromatic plant in the Bible. It is the first to be mentioned (Genesis 37:25) and, along with frankincense, the last (Revelation 18:13). It is the only ingredient to be included in both the holy anointing oil and holy incense (stacte is another word for myrrh [Exodus 30:34]).

The caravan of Ishmaelites was bringing balm of myrrh to Egypt when they encountered Joseph and his brothers (Genesis 37:25). Myrrh was a part of the gift that Israel (Jacob) sent with his sons to Joseph in Egypt (Genesis 43:11). Esther bathed in myrrh for six months prior to her marriage to the King of Persia (Esther 2:12), and myrrh is mentioned several times in Song of Solomon as a luxuriant and sensual perfume. Solomon makes more references to myrrh than does any other Bible author (Song of Solomon 1:13; 3:6; 4:6,14; 5:1,5,13).

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Both the Hebrew (*mor*) and the Greek (*muron*, *smurna* and *smurnizo*) words for myrrh mean “bitter,” probably because myrrh was used by ancient people in the embalming process. For this reason, some scholars believe that the gift of myrrh to the Christ Child was prophetic, foretelling the suffering that would characterize His death on the cross.

Myrrh is the dried resin of several species of *commiphora*, shrubs or small trees that will grow only in the arid and semiarid regions of the southern peninsula of Arabia and the Somalian deserts of northeast Africa. (Both areas have the same climate, latitude and soil conditions.) Frankincense and balm of Gilead are also resinous gums from small desert trees from the same region and from the same botanical family (*Burseraceae*).

**Source for Essential Oil**—Steam distilled from the resin/gum of the trunks and limbs of the tree.

**Ancient Uses**—Myrrh is another of the medicines mentioned in the *Ebers Papyrus* of the sixteenth century BC. It is also used in *Hildegard's Medicine*, a compilation of early German medicines by the highly regarded German herbalist Hildegard of Bingen. Hildegard of Bingen was a twelfth-century Benedictine nun who used herbs and oils for healing. She founded her own convent and was the author of numerous works on the use of plants for healing.

Pregnant women used myrrh for protection against infectious diseases and to produce feelings of well-being. When they went into labor, they diffused and inhaled myrrh to reduce anxiety and facilitate calmness. Myrrh was massaged on the perineum to facilitate stretching and afterwards to prevent or remove abdominal stretch marks. It was also used routinely on the umbilical cord of a newborn to protect the navel from infection.

Myrrh was used for oral hygiene and as an insect repellent. The Arabian people used myrrh for many skin conditions, such as chapped and cracked skin and wrinkles.

From ancient times to the present, myrrh has been a popular fixing agent, a substance that prolongs and protects the fragrances in other oils. As mentioned, myrrh was used in both the holy anointing oil and holy incense formulas given to Moses. It was blended with many perfumes and ointments in biblical times and is used today in many popular perfumes.



**Medical Properties**—Myrrh contains high concentrations of sesquiterpenes, which stimulate the limbic system, the center of memory and emotions. It is an oil of gladness and has an emotional releasing, healing and uplifting effect.

Sesquiterpenes also stimulate the hypothalamus gland (along with the pineal and pituitary glands), the master gland of the human body. The hypothalamus produces many vital hormones, including thyroid and growth hormones. Myrrh has a balancing effect on the thyroid and the entire endocrine system. It is also a powerful antioxidant.

It is antiseptic, antitumoral, anti-inflammatory, antiviral, analgesic/anesthetic and antiparasitic, and it supports the immune system.

**Modern Uses**—Bronchitis, diabetes, diarrhea, cancer, fungal infections (athlete's foot, candida, eczema, ringworm), hepatitis, parasites, skin conditions (chapped and cracked skin, wrinkles, stretch marks), thrush in babies, thyroid imbalance, tooth and gum infections, vaginal yeast infections, viral hepatitis.





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## Myrtle (*myrtus communis*)

**Hebrew:** *hadas*

*And he was bringing up Hadassah, that is Esther... for she had neither father nor mother. Now the young lady was beautiful of form and face. (Esther 2:7)*

*The mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands. Instead of the thorn bush the cypress will come up; and instead of the nettle the myrtle will come up; and it will be a memorial to the LORD, for an everlasting sign which will not be cut off. (Isaiah 55:12–13)*

*I saw at night, and behold, a man was riding on a red horse, and he was standing among the myrtle trees which were in the ravine, with red, sorrel, and white horses behind him. Then I said, 'My lord, what are these?' And the angel who was speaking with me said to me, 'I will show you what these are.' And the man who was standing among the myrtle trees answered and said, 'These are those whom the LORD has sent to patrol the earth.' So they answered the angel of the LORD who was standing among the myrtle trees, and said, 'We have patrolled the earth, and behold, all the earth is peaceful and quiet.' (Zechariah 1:8–11)*

The Bible contains some very interesting references to myrtle. First, the Hebrew word for the myrtle is *hadas*, which is the feminine form of *hadassah*. Esther 2:7 tells us that Hadassah was Esther's Hebrew name. Esther, the beautiful young woman who would risk her own life to save her people, was named for the lovely myrtle tree.

In Isaiah 55:12–13, the Holy One of Israel promises an everlasting covenant with His people. He will turn a barren wilderness (the thorn bush and the nettle) into a lush landscape capable of sustaining the cypress and the myrtle. Myrtles are evergreen trees that flourish in watercourses and are fitting symbols of the recovery and establishment of God's promises. In this passage from Isaiah, the myrtle is chosen as a memorial, an everlasting sign of an everlasting covenant.

In the first chapter of Zechariah, the prophet receives a vision in which the angel of the Lord is standing among a grove of myrtle trees. (He is in a ravine, or watercourse, which is its usual habitat.) Three times



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Scripture says that the angel of the Lord is standing among the myrtle trees. Zechariah is prophesying about the restoration of Israel and the coming of the Messiah. The myrtle is said to represent God's blessing in Scripture. Once in Nehemiah and twice in Isaiah, the myrtle is associated with Messianic Kingdom blessings (Nehemiah 8:15; Isaiah 41:19, 55:13).

The Jews of ancient Israel would welcome the Sabbath by filing their homes with the fresh desert-rain fragrance of two bouquets of myrtle. Myrtle branches were also used to build the booths for the Feast of Tabernacles.

**Source of Essential Oil**—Steam distilled from the leaves of the tree.

**Ancient Uses**—A beautiful tree in its own right, the myrtle has been a symbol for chaste beauty since antiquity. In honor of Hadassah, or Esther, many brides in the Middle East still wear myrtle as a symbol for innocence or virginity. In several ancient cultures, myrtle was used for skin care and in many religious ceremonies and purification rites. Medicinally, it was used for catarrhal conditions (asthma, bronchitis, chronic coughs and tuberculosis), diarrhea, dysentery and bladder, lung and sinus infections.

**Medical Properties**—Myrtle has been studied by Dr. Daniel Penoel, a French medical doctor and world-renowned pioneer in the therapeutic uses of essential oils, for normalizing hormonal imbalances of the thyroid and ovaries. Research has also been done on its soothing effects on the respiratory system. Myrtle is antimutagenic, antispasmodic, antihistamine, antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, antiparasitic and antiseptic, a deodorizer, an expectorant, a liver stimulant, prostate decongestant and stimulant and sinus/lung decongestant. It is mood elevating and supports the immune system.

**Modern Uses**—Anger (soothes), asthma, catarrh, colds, coughs, cystitis, bronchitis, diarrhea, dysentery, dyspepsia (impaired digestion), endocrine problems, flatulence, flu, hemorrhoids, infections, infectious diseases, insomnia, muscle spasms, prostate problems, pulmonary disorders, sinus infection, skin conditions (acne, blemishes, bruises, oily skin, psoriasis, etc.), throat/lung infections, thyroid problems, tuberculosis, ureter infections.

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## Onycha (*styrax benzoin*)

**Hebrew:** *shechelet*

*You shall make incense . . . pure and holy.* (Exodus 30:35)

As in the case of galbanum, onycha is specifically mentioned in Scripture only once, as an ingredient required by the Lord in the holy incense. Onycha has a delicate aroma and was well-known as an ancient perfume. It contains vanilla aldehyde, which gives it a fragrance somewhat like that of vanilla yet it is warmer, sweeter and more profound.

Onycha is an aromatic resinous gum from the balsam or benzoin tree in the Far East. It is also called friar's balm, or benzoin, meaning "incense of Java" or "Java frankincense." Like frankincense, it has an emotionally uplifting effect.

**Source of Essential Oil**—Absolute extraction from the resin of the tree.

**Ancient Uses**—During biblical times, people used onycha regularly as medicine. Onycha was primarily used to speed the healing of wounds and prevent infection. It was also used for thousands of years in ceremonies and for perfume. As mentioned previously, it was used as an ingredient in the holy incense formula given to Moses. The Chinese used it for its warming qualities, and in the West it was used for respiratory problems. It was traditionally known for its comforting, soothing and uplifting properties.

**Medical Properties**—Tincture of benzoin was used in hospitals as an antiseptic for more than a hundred years, starting in the middle of the nineteenth century. Onycha has a high concentration of phenylpropanoids (phenols) that act as a disinfectant by killing viruses and bacteria.

Onycha is very warming, which makes it good for colds, coughs and sore throats. It is soothing when used for dermatitis and skin wounds. It relieves stress when used in massage and helps sinusitis and bronchitis when inhaled. Onycha is antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, antidepressant (emotionally balancing and soothing) and antiseptic. It is an antioxidant, an astringent, a deodorant, a diuretic, an expectorant and a sedative.

**Modern Uses**—Arthritis, asthma, bleeding (slows or stops), bronchitis, chills, colic, colds, cough, constipation, circulation (poor), colic, cuts, dermatitis, flatulence, flu, gout, laryngitis, mucus, nervous tension, rheumatism, skin problems (lesions, chapped, inflamed and irritated skin), stomach problems, sinusitis, sore throat, urinary tract infections, wounds.



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## Rose of Sharon/Cistus (*cistus ladanifer*)

**Hebrew:** *chabatstsele*

*I am the rose of Sharon, the lily of the valleys.* (Song of Solomon 2:1)

Although Scripture attributes the phrase “I am the rose of Sharon, the lily of the valleys” to Solomon in the Song, it is thought to have been spoken prophetically as from the mouth of Christ. *Rose of Sharon* is known as one of the biblical names of Christ and is a picture of His perfection. In this sense, the *Rose of Sharon* is not botanical but a heavenly representation.

Scholars have had some difficulty in identifying which botanical rose was called the rose of Sharon. Sharon refers to the Plain of Sharon, located north of the port city, Joppa. Many roses grew in this part of ancient Israel, but scholars believe that the most likely candidate is labdanum, sometimes called rock rose or cistus. This beautiful rose has a soft desert, honey-like scent and flourished on the Plain of Sharon.

The healing qualities of the rock rose or cistus were discovered centuries ago when sheep or goats would accumulate the gum that exudes from this shrub in their wool or hides as they grazed in the desert. The shepherds noticed that when they rubbed their hands through the animal’s wool or hide, any cuts, scratches or wounds would heal much faster. In fact, once cistus had been identified as a healing agent, the gum was originally collected from the hair of goats. In modern times, cistus has been studied for its effects on healing and cell regeneration.

**Source of Essential Oil**—Steam distilled from the branches of the plant.

**Ancient Uses**—Cistus was one of the first aromatic substances used in the ancient world. It was used as a perfume and as an ointment to heal skin wounds and for catarrh, diarrhea and dysentery.

**Medical Properties**—Cistus is antibacterial, antiseptic, antihemorrhagic, antiviral, anti-inflammatory and neurotonic. It is a diuretic, an expectorant and an astringent. It supports the sympathetic nervous system, aids in normal cell regeneration and elevates emotions. It is calming to nerves and immune stimulating. Camphene, found in cistus, kills viruses and cleans the circulatory system.

**Modern Uses**—Arthritis, bleeding (stops), boils, bronchitis, colds, coughs, depression, hemorrhages, insomnia, nervous tension, rhinitis, urinary infections, wounds, wrinkles.

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## Spikenard (*nardostachys jatamansi*)

**Hebrew:** nerd, nard     **Greek:** nardos pistikos

*Your plants are an orchard of pomegranates with pleasant fruits, fragrant henna with spikenard, spikenard and saffron.* (Song of Solomon 4:13–14 NKJV)

*And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a woman came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard. Then she broke the flask and poured it on His head.* (Mark 14:3 NKJV)

At the time of Christ, spikenard was an extremely valuable oil. It was derived from an aromatic flowering herb with an earthy, musky spice fragrance. Native to the Himalayan Mountains of India and Tibet, spikenard was transported to Israel in sealed alabaster boxes.

The story of the woman with the flask is referenced in all four Gospels, perhaps because it was a remarkable occurrence to all four Gospel writers. The writers' wonder may have been due to the costliness of spikenard, one of the most precious oils in ancient times. (One pound cost approximately a year's wages for a common laborer of the time.)

Spikenard was generally used only by priests, kings or men in high office. When a distinguished guest came to visit, the wealthy master of the house would honor his guest by breaking open the spikenard and anointing the guest. Yet, as He pointed out, Jesus was not so honored by the religious leader into whose house he had come. Only the woman, a sinner, knew that He was worthy of such a gift.

Spikenard was used by both the Hebrews and the Romans for the burial of their dead. This is why Jesus said of the woman who poured the precious spikenard oil on Him, "She has come beforehand to anoint My body to the burial" (Mark 14:8 NKJV).

**Source of Essential Oil**—Steam distilled from the roots of the plant.

**Ancient Uses**—In the ancient world, spikenard was used for medicines, perfumes and incense, as a skin tonic and for its emotionally calming effects. Egyptians believed that incense that contained spikenard quelled fear and anxiety, improved meditation and induced restful sleep with pleasant dreams. In India spikenard is still highly valued as a medicinal herb, skin tonic and perfume.





**Medical Properties**—Spikenard has very high levels of sesquiterpenes (93%). This means that it is also very effective at crossing the blood-brain barrier. (Only cedarwood at 98% and vetiver at 97% have more.) As it comes from the *Valerianaceae* (valerian) botanical family, its fragrance is very calming, relaxing, soothing, mood elevating and effective in relieving stress, nervous tension and insomnia.

Spikenard also provides cardiovascular support. Dietrich Gumbel, Ph.D., author of several books, including *Principals of Holistic Therapy with Herbal Essences*, writes that spikenard (along with cypress) strengthens the heart and improves circulation. Spikenard helps to soothe, nourish and regenerate skin. According to Victoria Edwards, Director of the *Aromatherapy Institute and Research Center* and internationally known author, spikenard repairs the skin's physiological balance and causes permanent regeneration. It is also antibacterial, antifungal, anti-inflammatory and an immune stimulant.

**Modern Uses**—Allergies and allergic skin reactions, candida, cardiovascular problems, flatulence, heart arrhythmias, indigestion, insomnia, menstrual problems/PMS, migraine headaches, nausea, nervous tension, rashes, scar tissue, staph infections, stress, tachycardia, wounds that will not heal.





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## Not All Essential Oils Are Created Equal

**It is very important to note that everything that has been said about essential oils in this booklet assumes the use of therapeutic-grade essential oils. Using anything other than organic, therapeutic-grade may not only be ineffective but may also be dangerous.** Therefore, buying 100% pure, therapeutic-grade essential oils is not optional if the intention is to use them to improve or maintain health.

Several attributes distinguish therapeutic-grade essential oils from other essential oils. It starts with the cultivation of the herbs and plants. The kind of robust medicinal plants and herbs that produce the highest-quality essential oils must be grown under conditions that create high concentrations of therapeutic components. Plants must be grown on an organic farm, in virgin land, uncontaminated with chemical fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, etc. These requirements are of utmost importance. Since essential oils are the concentrated essence of the plant, any contaminants on the plant or in the soil will be present in the essential oil.

Truly potent plants require that the soil be nourished with organic mulch, minerals and enzymes and be watered with mountain stream or deep-well water. The farms should be located in climates that are ideal for the species and harvested at the height of potency.

Next, the plants must be carefully and expertly steam distilled to preserve the highest levels of therapeutic components. Each plant or herb must be distilled at the lowest temperature and lowest pressure possible for the specific amount of time that is optimum to protect fragile therapeutic components in that particular species. This is the same principle as cooking fresh vegetables. As most of us know, if vegetables are cooked at a high temperature for too long, they will lose most of their nutrients.

Therapeutic-grade oils are also produced from a first distillation only and are therefore known as Grade A Oils. First-distillation oils are obviously the most potent.

(Many companies want to produce fragrant essential oils rather than medicinal essential oils and will distill the same plants a second, third and fourth time. These are known as Grade B, C and D oils and are also called food-grade or fragrance-grade oils. Companies that produce fragrance-grade oils will also distill at high temperatures using maximum pressure

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for a short period of time. This will produce the desired fragrance, but most of the therapeutic components will be lost. These oils may also be diluted with chemical solvents. Over 90% of what is sold in the United States as “pure” essential oil is fragrance-grade and diluted. (The FDA has determined that a product need contain only 5% of the ingredient on the label in order to use the word pure.) These oils are found on the shelves of many health food stores and at online discount houses. They may be less expensive, but they will not be useful for healing.)

There is only one company that meets the standards of excellence outlined here – only one company that guarantees that their oils are organic, therapeutic-grade and have the words therapeutic-grade printed on every label. They grow extremely potent medicinal plants on their organic farms all over the world and are the largest producer and world leader in therapeutic-grade essential oils.

This company markets their oils via independent distributors. Although the use of essential oils is safe, it is important to learn how to use them effectively. A worldwide network of independent distributors ensures that consumers will have access to someone who can answer questions and recommend resources. To find the distributor who gave or sent you this book, please see *For More Information* at the end of this book.



## About the Author

Elizabeth Flores has been educating herself and others about the healing power of essential oils for over 14 years. In 1996 she went to see an M.D. in Phoenix, Arizona who surprised her by recommending essential oils to treat a chronic and very stubborn health problem.

She was amazed at the results. Soon afterwards he recommended an essential oil for an acute problem requiring surgery. The problem disappeared and surgery was not necessary. Having a background in biology, as a seminar trainer and a long standing fascination with natural remedies, she enthusiastically began to study the history, chemistry, use and efficacy of the oils and to share her findings with others.

Elizabeth is the founder of *SunTeam Health Resources*, one of the largest distributors for the world leader in therapeutic-grade essential oils, *Young Living Essential Oils*. She is also the Chairman of the Board of a Christian non-profit organization. She lives in near Santa Cruz, California with her husband and elderly father. She has a daughter who is an RN and lives in Portland, Oregon with her husband and their four little boys. All of them as well as her sisters, nieces and nephews and their children have been using essential oils for years!