

Easter: The Perfect Sin Sacrifice

God is a God of infinite detail. He made sure that Jesus fulfilled every requirement for a sin sacrifice according to His laws. The account in Mark of Mary Magdalene bringing sweet spices on the Sabbath to anoint Jesus' body reveals a very important fact about Jesus' burial.

Jesus died around 3 p.m. in the afternoon just before sundown on a Friday. At sundown the Sabbath would begin, and the body could not be prepared on that day. When Jesus delivered His spirit into the hands of the Father and died, He was taken off the cross and wrapped for burial. There was not sufficient time to prepare His body completely for burial because those tending Him were rushing to get the job done before sundown.

When the Sabbath was past, the two Marys brought sweet spices to anoint the body of Jesus and thus complete the embalming process that could not be completed before the Sabbath. Along with these sweet spices I believe frankincense was included. Frankincense is a sweet white gum that comes from a tree in Israel. It has a sweet odor and was mixed with other sweet spices to make the holy perfume mentioned in Exodus 30:34. Frankincense was used with oil to cover most of the sacrificial offerings required by the Levitical law. There was one sacrifice, however, upon which frankincense was forbidden for anointing. This sacrifice was the sin offering. We find this in Leviticus 5:11: "He shall put no oil upon it, neither shall he put any frankincense thereon: for it is a sin offering" (KJV).

God is a God of infinite detail. He made sure frankincense was never laid on the body of Jesus, because if it had been, He would not have fulfilled the requirements as the perfect sin sacrifice. I believe Mary was carrying the very frankincense

that was given to her by the Magi on the night Jesus was born. She probably kept it in a safe place and treasured it for years.

The scriptures do not tell us that Mary was carrying frankincense, but it is a natural assumption since she was carrying sweet spices. I believe this was the case and that it proves how awesome our God is. He has marked the heavens with the span of His hand and can hold all the waters on earth in the hollow of His hand (Isa. 40:12), yet He humbles Himself to number the hairs on our heads and to see the hearts of men. He has named every star in the universes (Ps. 147:4-5), and yet He saw the need to prevent frankincense from being applied to the body of our Lord, which would have nullified His acceptance as the perfect sin sacrifice.

All we have talked about this morning should give us strong confidence that God can meet our needs through Jesus Christ because He loves us. Jesus fulfilled every requirement to be the perfect sin offering for our sake, and because He did, we now can have access to the throne room of God through prayer and can approach His throne of grace and find help in time of need. So what are you worried about?

READ: Numbers 16:41-18:32; Mark 16:1-20; Psalm 55:1-23; Proverbs 11:7