

Of Mites and Myrrh

Delighting the Divine

Part 3 - March 16, 2007

Did you know that God loves to nurture Promised Land? He does. He gathers us as a hen gathers chicks under her wing. He protect us, disciples us and uses us to teach others about Himself. At this time, what God desires to teach us is that He is Forgiving and for Giving. To reach us, He must first strip away all we think we know about giving.

God has specific plans for the ministries to which He calls Promised Land, and the recipients are greatly blessed. Yet greater blessings belong to those God uses to support those ministries. God’s Giving Plan is not about being blessed, however the better we understand this great Plan the better God can use us. We have so much to learn about God’s earth-shattering and life-changing Giving Plan! Even so, we are going to take baby steps so that we have time to unlearn the old habits and develop new ones.

From the beginning, mankind has returned tithe and brought offerings to the Lord. Some, like the poor widow, can bring only a mite or two. Others, out of their abundance and blessing, bring gold, frankincense and myrrh. The Lord is pleased by both, as long as they are given in the right spirit and according to what He has asked (see Genesis 4:1-7).

Not all offerings are financial, of course. Time and talents, a farmer’s produce, a carpenter’s furniture, a land owner’s plot, an artist’s creation; all can be offerings (see Exodus 35: 20-35). Still, since most people think of offerings in dollars and cents, here we will focus on financial offerings.

Promised Land’s white offering envelopes list four categories of giving; General, Thank, First Fruit and Hundred-fold Blessing. Offering categories do not reflect where the money is spent, only why it is given. The offering envelopes are designed in this way to prompt us to acknowledge the special ways that God works in our lives; ways beyond the ordinary or General.

Again, offering categories have nothing to do with how money will be spent. The categories only specify why money is given. In researching the Old Testament, I found a score of offering types, and probably missed several. Some offerings are named for what is offered, such as drink or grain offering. Some are named for why the offering is brought, such as fellowship, peace or thank offering. Some are generic offerings, like burnt offering or freewill offering. Some are very specific, such as Nazarite or First Fruit offering.

I like to think of our offerings in terms of fragrances or flavors that rise before the Lord when they are given. I imagine that the General offerings might have a rich and luscious scent, perhaps vanilla or amaretto or clean sheets. Maybe the fragrance is like that of a forest, or the taste like rain on your tongue. I believe that General offerings are simple, and that in their gentleness they delight the divine senses of God.

The next time you have opportunity to give a General offering, lift your eyes to the heavens and watch as God smiles at your simple, perfect offering. Shalom.

