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**Foreword: Very Reverend
Dr Robert Willis, Dean of Canterbury
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Appendix 1: Bible References to Perfume, Odour and the Sense of Smell

Appendix: 2: The Early Medieval Windows of Canterbury Cathedral

Perfume in the Bible

Dr Tony Curtis

As we say, now for something completely different! In the last edition of the ICATS Newsletter we reviewed *Fundamentals of Fragrance Chemistry*. This authoritative textbook is a must for any serious person in the industry. This new contribution from Charles Sell is worthy of occupying the bookshelf of almost anyone. In his preface Charles outlines how this book developed from his public lectures linking Science to the Bible. I completely empathise with his statement:

'Audience members invariably ask if I could recommend a book on the subject and this led me to the realisation there was none.'

Many years ago I was validating a degree in Perfumery. One of the questions to be addressed was 'What would be the core textbook? There was none suitable. David Williams and I said 'No problem we will write

it.' Almost two years later *Introduction to Perfumery* was in print but we were somewhat older and wiser. There was a lot of research and many late nights were involved. This new book is timely as IFEAT are exploring how they can make the industry more accessible to young people and a wider audience (not necessarily with a scientific background). I admire the skill of the author in producing a book which is accessible, authoritative, informative and a good read. This is a rare achievement. The author and The Royal Society of Chemistry are to be commended for publishing this exciting and eclectic book for a wide readership.

Chapter 2: How the Sense of Smell Works is a perfect example of the ingenuity of this author. In some ten pages he outlines why 'What you smell is not what I may smell.' Through nasal enzymes, odour receptors and

signal pattern recognition, Charles beautifully explains the individuality of odour perception.

The core of any study of Perfumery is to know fragrant ingredients. This is why it forms such a major part of both *Introduction to Perfumery* and the ICATS / IFEAT Diploma programme. This is also true of *Perfume in the Bible* with 49 pages devoted to the topic. However, do not think 'Not again!' Chapter 6: The Ingredients of Biblical Perfumes starts off with Agarwood. We have new perspectives to the aroma materials topic. A historical overview is linked to the biological activity (antibacterial properties) and of course the religious use in embalment. By the way, other technical aspects such as manufacturing methods and major aspects of chemical composition are not forgotten. You think you know your materials? Do read this book to

get a fresh perspective on them. At Christmas you will be able to speak with both Biblical and Perfumery authority on Frankincense and Myrrh.

Orris is one of my favourite oils. I have expensive tastes. Again, the historical, technical and perfumery cover is good. I am always fascinated as to how in the first place that it was discovered that the orris rhizome should be stored for two or three years before final processing. Was it a happy accident?

A special property of this type of book is everybody can get something different from it. Just as with our perception and interpretation of odour is personal, so is the enjoyment of a book. As with most young Chemists, I explored several options on graduation. I eventually entered the Aroma Trades but I was also offered interesting jobs in the glass industry. Thus, I found Appendix 2: *The Early Medieval Windows of Canterbury Cathedral* a special joy. I am off to read more. I had forgotten

that not all 'stained glass' is stained glass. Silver staining is a completely different process to pot glass. I had not known why Venetian glass was so fine or how it differs from Forest glass. This has a higher potassium content being derived from wood ash rather than soda ash used in Venetian glass. This book provides as many facets and illuminations to its subject as the medieval stained-glass windows that inspired it.

I read a UK publication called 'The Week'. It has a section called 'Boring but Important'. A book of this nature must of necessity use some technical terms. These are flagged-up in the body of the text with succinct explanation of both chemical (e.g. terpene) and historical / religious (e.g. Tetramorph) terms given in the glossary. The appendices, bibliography and Biblical references index will allow readers who wish to pursue the subject further with an ideal starting point for further study and research. Pride of place in this

book though goes to the illustrations. Next time I am in the Southeast of England I must visit Canterbury Cathedral and see the full glory of the medieval glass.

All professionals involved with Perfumery and aroma materials will appreciate the fresh perspectives of this book. General readers will also enjoy it and see how Perfumery is more than just a nice smell. It has thousands of years of technology, art, culture and religion associated with it. Sadly, often the books we review cost well over £100 and are not affordable for the personal bookshelf. At less than £20 get it. You will not regret and you will be informed and entertained. Congratulations are due to Charles and the Royal Society of Chemistry on this original and adventurous publication.

Read more on Charles Sell's fascinating research and career on page 10 of this edition.

