

8/18/2019

“Anointing With Oil”

Scripture: Exodus 30:23-25; James 5:14-15

Series: Moving with the Holy Spirit

Today we continue our series this month on “Moving with the Holy Spirit.” Our focus today will be upon anointing. In particular, anointing with oil.

As James wrote to early believers and followers of Jesus, ***“Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven.”***

(James 5:14-15 NIV)

According to Bible Study Tools (12/15/18) . . .

“Oils in the Bible - . . . There are numerous references throughout scripture regarding anointing oils to be used for ceremonial purposes. These anointing oils often resemble the modern essential oils that are familiar today. For example, Exodus 30:23-25 describes the “holy anointing oil” as such:

“Take the finest spices: of liquid myrrh 500 shekels, and of sweet-smelling cinnamon half as much, that is, 250, and 250 of aromatic cane, and 500 of cassia, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and a hint of olive oil. And you shall make of these a sacred anointing oil blended as by the perfumer; it shall be a holy anointing oil.”

“Though essential oils have become a somewhat modern phenomenon, it seems the tradition of using naturally derived aromatic oils have a long history in Christianity. Having been used in religious sacraments for millenniums, perhaps (*and some definitely*) the health benefits of these anointing oils were known long before their contemporary popularity!”

With regards to religious use, we note . . .

Exodus 28, which talks about God’s instruction to Moses to anoint Aaron and his sons saying, then ***“After you put these clothes on your brother Aaron and his sons, anoint and ordain them. Consecrate them so they may serve me as priests.”*** As later instructed with regard to the specific formula given, it shall not be used for any but holy purposes, and upon those so ordained (Exodus 30:32-33).

Regarding other religious or spiritual use, the prophet **Samuel anointed David** as king of Israel as God instructed him (1 Samuel 16:12-13). And other kings were anointed by other prophets, to be representatives, or “the Lord’s anointed,” of God’s Lordship of his people.

However, other oils, or combination formulas of them, were also used for non-religious purposes. So, oils such as myrrh, frankincense, cedarwood, cinnamon, juniper, cassia, balsam fir, sandalwood, and others, were used in various ways for spirit, mind and body.

According to the Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, the two most common words associated with anointing in biblical Hebrew are translated "pour" (Deuteronomy 28:40; Ruth 3:3; etc.), as an ointment, or "anoint." Another originally meant "to smear," or "spread with oil, as used in food preparation, as was done with unleavened wafers (Exodus 29:2). It also refers to cosmetic use (Amos 6:6).

From an article that Gwenn Barteld shared with me, and as found elsewhere online, "The origin of anointing was from the shepherds of the day. Lice and other insects would often get into the wool of sheep, and when they got near the sheep's head, they could burrow into the sheep's ears and kill the sheep. So, ancient shepherds poured oil on the sheep's head. This made the wool slippery, making it impossible for insects to get near the sheep's ears because the insects would slide off."

And, as Gwenn can better share her own testimony, distinctions, and benefits of essential oils with you, I encourage you to ask her about them sometime.

With regards to other secular use, the Hebrews anointed themselves for a festival occasion or a joyous celebration. The anointing had a connotation of gladness.

As David, once a shepherd himself, declared of the Lord in Psalm 23 (NIV), "***You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.***"

In Luke (10:34 NIV), Jesus tells the Parable of the Good Samaritan, who comes to the aid of another traveler, who has been robbed and beaten. "*He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him.*"

Mark tells of Jesus sending out the Twelve ahead of him, giving them power over impure spirits. "*They went out and preached that people should repent. They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them.*" (6:12b-3 NIV)

Later, he recalls during Jesus' final week, as the chief priests and the teachers of the law were scheming to arrest Jesus secretly and kill him. ". . . *While he was in Bethany, reclining at the table in the home of Simon the Leper, a woman came with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, made of pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the perfume on his head.*" (Mark 14:1-9)

And again later, after Jesus was crucified and laid in the tomb. . . “*When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus’ body.*” (Mark 15:1)

And so, anointing with oils was both a common, yet very special practice in many ways. Which brings us back to James and the early church, and here today.

As Deacon Megan pointed out last Sunday, there is wonderful power in praying together in the Spirit!

And through the centuries, anointing with holy oil has also been a practice used by the faithful.

And so, this week, as we continue to move with the Holy Spirit, I make this invitation to you today. . .

Are any among you sick – in spirit, mind or body?

Are you struggling with doubt, temptation or sin?

Are you wrestling with torn feelings and emotions such as anger, sadness, fear, or grief?

Are you dealing with an illness or ailment?

If so, I invite you to come forward to pray. One of our prayer partners will join you in prayer. And if you want to be anointed with oil, on your forehead or your hand, in the name of the Lord, Rev. Jack or I will be glad to do so.

Let us pray . . .