

# Anoint My Head with Oil; My Cup Overflows

(Psalm 23:5b)

## Introduction

We've been learning the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm. So far, we've looked at the first four and 1/2 verses.

We have learned that this song David wrote isn't just talking about shepherds taking care of a flock of sheep. No, it's a beautiful picture of how well our Good Shepherd, Jesus, takes care of us.

Remember that this is David's little lamb that is speaking.

He says in Verse 1:

*The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. (Psalm 23:1)*

He is bragging to all the poor sheep on the other side of the fence who don't have good shepherds. He's boasting that he is completely satisfied and contented because his shepherd supplies all his needs.

Next, he says in Verse 2:

*He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. (Psalm 23:2)*

David's little lamb is bragging that his shepherd completely satisfies his hunger and thirst, and this allows him to rest.

This reminds us that we are all born with a spiritual hunger and thirst to know God. We want to know what He looks like, what heaven is like, and most of all we want to know how to get there. Only our Good Shepherd can completely satisfy our spiritual hunger and thirst and give us spiritual rest.

He says in Verse 3:

*He restores my soul. (Psalm 23:3a)*

David's little lamb is explaining how his shepherd tenderly and lovingly picks him up and gets him back on his feet if ever he gets cast down.

This is reassuring to us, too. When our relationship with our Good Shepherd is broken by our sin, He is always willing and able to pick us up and restore us to a right relationship with Him. (1 John 1:9)

In Verse 3, he goes on to say:

*He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. (Psm 23:3b)*

David's little lamb is instructing us that if we faithfully follow the Good Shepherd, He will guide us along the right paths in life so that our lives will bring honor to His name.

He says in Verse 4:

*Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; (Psalm 23:4a)*

David's sheep promises that when we walk through the dark valleys in our lives, we don't need to be afraid because our Good Shepherd is close by.

In Verse 4, he goes on to say:

*your rod and your staff, they comfort me. (Psalm 23:4b)*

David's little lamb is explaining that the Good Shepherd has given us the tools we need for life.

The "rod" is a picture of the Word of God which teaches us how to live a God-honoring life. Remember, the shepherd used his rod to herd the sheep to keep them from roaming out of the green pasture. He also used it like a wooden spoon to discipline the sheep when they were naughty.

And, the "staff" is a picture of the Holy Spirit, Who is our comforter. Remember how, when in a big herd of sheep, it brought them comfort to keep their eye on the shepherd. They knew that if they always followed him, he would take them to the place where the green grass grows and the quiet water runs.

He says in Verse 5:

*You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; (Psalm 23:5a)*

David's sheep is explaining that a good shepherd goes up to the mountain meadows to prepare them before he takes his flock up there. Remember, the shepherd made several trips up through the valley to the mountain meadows to scatter grass seed, pull out the poisonous weeds, and to destroy the predators like snakes in the grass, foxes, and wolves.

This reminds us of how our Good Shepherd, Jesus, has gone to heaven to prepare a place for us.

Today we will learn that God anoints us with the Holy Spirit—we have been set apart for His use. And He fills us with His blessings—giving us more than we need so that it overflows out of our lives and spreads into the lives of others.

## Opening Prayer

Father, You are such a good shepherd. Thank You for providing everything we need. Thank You for giving us spiritual rest and for quenching our inner thirst for You. Thank You for restoring us to right standing when we sin against You. Lord, continue to reveal Yourself to us through this beautiful Psalm of David. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

## Memory Verse

*And say to the people of Israel, "This holy anointing oil is reserved for Me from generation to generation." (Exodus 30:31)*

## Lesson

**[Materials needed:** vegetable oil, cooking spray, motor oil, lubricating oil such as WD 40 or 3 in 1 oil, olive oil, Vaseline petroleum jelly, cooking pan, leather shoes and/or leather purse, a toy car, a tool such as an adjustable wrench, a cake mix that requires oil, toy duck or real duck feather, Avon's 'Skin so Soft' or other cosmetic cream protection.]

**[Teacher, display various types of oils and demonstrate or talk about each type.]** All of these are different types of oil and each one has a different purpose. What do you think each one of these is for?

- **Mink oil** – used for softening and waterproofing leather such as a shoe or purse. [Rub some onto a leather shoe.]
- **Cooking spray** - used to keep food from sticking to the pan. [Spray some into a frying pan.]
- **Lubricating oil** – keeps metal parts working freely and smoothly. I put some in my sewing machine before I use it. The oil keeps parts from wearing out. [Apply some oil to the wheels of a toy car.]
- **Vegetable oil** – this oil is used as an ingredient to keep a cake moist and give it texture and flavor. If you didn't put the oil in, the cake would crumble when it was sliced. [Display a cake mix.]
- **Vaseline** – petroleum jelly is used to protect your skin from drying out and you can use it to water proof things because it's so thick.
- **Motor oil** – this oil is used to lubricate the parts of an engine. Without oil an engine would shut down and be ruined.
- **Duck feather oil** – did you ever wonder why a duck could spend all day in the water and once they came out of the water their feathers were almost completely dry? God created a special kind of oil especially for the duck's feathers that keeps water from soaking in and weighing the duck down.

- **Olive oil** – this oil is used in cooking. In Bible times olive oil was used for medical purposes—they used it to clean cuts and wounds. It was also for anointing.

Our verse today says, “*You anoint my head with oil.*”

**Ask:** What does the word “anoint” mean?

To *anoint* means to *apply a liquid; to smear with oil*. In Bible times anointing someone with oil was a way to show others that person was chosen by God for His service.

Well, when David, wrote Psalm 23, he was a shepherd. So, when he wrote this Psalm, he was thinking of another use for olive oil that we haven’t discussed yet.

**Ask:** Have you ever been on a picnic when the bees and flies or mosquitoes were so annoying that you spent more time swatting at them than having fun? The bugs may have even ruined your picnic.

In the summer, many different flies and other bugs would terrorize a flock of sheep. They would get into a sheep’s nose or ears or eyes where they could get moisture.

The nose fly can be so annoying they can harass sheep literally to death. They deposit their eggs in the damp mucous membranes of the sheep's nose. The eggs hatch to form worms, which make their way into the sheep's brain. The sheep would be so bothered by the flies that they would not eat or rest properly. To relieve this irritation, sheep will beat their heads against rocks and trees.

At the first sign of these pesky flies, a good shepherd will apply a special ointment to the heads of his sheep so that their peaceful grazing can continue. The most effective remedy was a mixture of olive oil, sulfur and spices. This mixture was generously rubbed or smeared over the entire head of each sheep. The sheep felt instantly better! They were put at ease and could graze and rest comfortably again. During the summer, a shepherd would do this many times.

Life is full of pesky things beyond our control that can really “bug us.” By allowing the Good Shepherd to anoint us with the Holy Spirit, He will calm these irritations in our lives.

As we have been studying the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm, we have learned several different word pictures for the Holy Spirit. First, we learned that when the Shepherd leads us besides still waters, that the **water** represented the Holy Spirit – the Living Water of eternal life. Then two weeks ago we learned that the shepherd’s **staff** represents the Holy Spirit, Who is our comforter and the One who leads us into all truth.

In this lesson we will see that the Holy Spirit is also represented in the Bible as **oil**. Just as the oil brought relief to the sheep, the Holy Spirit comforts and protects us from things that might harm us or cause irritation in our life.

### **Bible Lesson**

There are many examples of anointing in the Bible.

After Moses led the children of Israel out of Egypt through the Red Sea, he brought them to the foot of Mt. Sinai where God gave them the Ten Commandments. At that time God also gave them instructions for building the Tabernacle, the place they were to worship Him. And He even gave them specific instructions on what to wear.

Exodus 28:40-41

*“For Aaron's sons, make tunics, sashes, and special head coverings that are glorious and beautiful. (41) Clothe your brother, Aaron, and his sons with these garments, and then **anoint** and ordain them. Consecrate them so they can serve as My priests.*

When Moses anointed Aaron and his sons with olive oil, it was a way to show everyone that they were chose by God to serve as priests.

Exodus 29:4-7

*“Present Aaron and his sons at the entrance of the Tabernacle, and wash them with water. (5) Dress Aaron in his priestly garments—the tunic, the robe worn with the ephod, the ephod itself, and the chest piece. Then wrap the decorative sash of the ephod around him. (6) Place the turban on his head, and fasten the sacred medallion to the turban. (7) Then **anoint** him by pouring the anointing oil over his head*

Another example of anointing was many years later...

The children of Israel had been in the Promised Land for a long time. They had been ruled by judges for many years. When Samuel, the last judge, was getting old and planning to retire, the people told Samuel that they did not want to be ruled by a judge anymore; they wanted a king like all the other nations around them.

One day God spoke to Samuel and told him that a man by the name of Saul would be coming and that he was to anoint him as the king over the people.

1 Samuel 9:15-16

*Now the LORD had told Samuel the previous day, (16) “About this time tomorrow I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin. **Anoint** him to be the leader of my people, Israel. He will rescue them from the Philistines, for I have looked down on my people in mercy and have heard their cry.”*

Samuel took a bottle of olive oil and poured it over Saul's head to anoint him to be King over Israel. [Teacher, take a doll and cover the head with oil demonstrating the anointing.]

When Samuel anointed Saul with oil, it was a way to show everyone that God had chosen him to be set apart to have power and authority over the people as the king of Israel.

Here's another example of anointing. In Bible times, it was customary for a host to wash his guest's feet and to anoint them with oil when

they came to your home for dinner. It was a way to honor them and show them they were important to you.

John 12:1-3

*Six days before the Passover celebration began, Jesus arrived in Bethany, the home of Lazarus--the man He had raised from the dead. (2) A dinner was prepared in Jesus' honor. Martha served, and Lazarus was among those who ate with Him. (3) Then Mary took a twelve-ounce jar of expensive perfume made from essence of nard, and she **anointed** Jesus' feet with it, wiping His feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance.*

The Bible also tells us to anoint people who are sick and to pray for them. In fact, this is a common practice even in our modern times.

James 5:14

*Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, **anointing** you with oil in the name of the Lord.*

Because oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit, anointing someone with oil and praying over them is a way to show them blessing and honor. It's as if to say, “May the Holy Spirit bring you healing and comfort and protection from things that might harm you or cause irritation in life.”

God anoints us, too, not with olive oil, but with the power of the Holy Spirit. Every Sunday morning, we meet for prayer before the service begins and we ask God to anoint the pastor and the Sunday school teachers to teach God's word in a powerful way that ministers to people's hearts.

When you ask God to anoint someone with the Holy Spirit, you are asking God to give that person supernatural power to accomplish God's will; that is, to give that person spiritual gifts so that he might be used by God for His purposes.

When David wrote this song, he was thinking about when, as a shepherd taking care of his flock, he would anoint the heads and faces of his sheep with oil and how that instantly relieved them from

those pesky flies. That would help them begin to graze and rest comfortably again. And, he was comparing that to how the Holy Spirit protects us and cares for us and brings peace and joy into our lives. He was saying, “*You honor me by **anointing** my head with oil...*” (Psalm 23:5b)

### ***My Cups Overflows***

These thoughts filled David up with such gladness that the very next thing he says is, “*My cup overflows with blessings.*” He could not contain the joy he had in his heart.

David was reflecting upon how our Good Shepherd meets our every need. He satisfies our spiritual hunger which gives rest to our souls. He quenches our inner thirst. He guides us along the right paths in life. He comforts and protects us and He showers us with His blessings. Because He loves us so much, He not only gives us what we need, but he gives us *more* than we need. [Teacher, fill a cup to overflowing as an object lesson.]

He fills us with His love, peace, and happiness—so much happiness that it starts running over and spreading out and reaching others.

Let's think of things that God has done for us or things He has given us. How does your cup overflow with blessings?

[Teacher, allow children time to brainstorm and recall blessings in the Bible or blessings they can expect to receive from the Good Shepherd. Some examples would be: healing, everlasting life, prosperity, long life, protection, leading (by still waters and in paths of righteousness), knowledge, finding us when we are lost, never leaving us or forsaking us, supplying all our needs, having no lack for we shall not want, never fearing, security, help in time of need, power over the enemy, etc.]

### **Closing Prayer**

Father, thank You so much for all the blessings that You pour into our lives. Thank You for our wonderful families and our good beds that we get to sleep in and running water and food to eat. You have blessed us so much that we want to pour our lives into other people. Show us who you want us to bless. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

### **Learning Activities**

#### **Craft Corner**

#### **Game Center**

##### ***“My Cup Runneth Over” Relay***

Divide your children up into two teams. Give each team a large spoon. Place a bowl of marbles, packing peanuts, jelly beans, or anything else you might have in the front of the line in between both teams. Place a cup for each team at the opposite end of the room. On the word “go” the first two children in line should scoop up some marbles onto their spoon, race down to the other end of the room and drop the marbles into their team's cup. The team who fills up their cup first and it overflows wins.

Or, use the following review questions in a time of discussion or a game of your choice:

1. In Psalm 23, what three word pictures does David use to refer to the Holy Spirit? (**Still waters** refers to the Living Water of eternal life. The **shepherd's staff** that leads and guides the sheep. **Oil**, that brings comfort and relief and protection from pests.)
2. What does the word “anoint” mean? (To set apart for God's use.)

3. Name three types of oil. (Vegetable oil, motor oil, duck feather, mink oil, olive oil.)
4. How is oil useful? (You can cook with it; clean wounds; it helps ducks float; waterproofs shoes; keeps metal parts working.)
5. How was oil useful to a shepherd? (He applies oil to the head of a sheep to keep the flies from “bugging” the sheep.)
6. What did oil do for the sheep? (It put the sheep at ease so they could graze and rest comfortably.)
7. In Bible times how was olive oil used for medical purpose? (They used it to clean cuts and wounds.)
8. In what way is the Holy Spirit like anointing oil? (He calms or comforts us and He protects us from things that might harm us or cause irritation to us.)
9. Who did Moses anoint with oil and why did he do it? (Moses anointed Aaron and his sons to show everyone that they were special people, chosen by God to serve the people.)
10. Who did Samuel anoint with oil and why did he do it? (Samuel anointed Saul to show people he was God’s choice to be king over Israel.)
11. In Bible times, how did a host anoint his guests with oil? And why? (He would anoint their feet with oil to honor them and show them they were important to him.)
12. What did the Apostle James tell us to do when we are sick? (*Call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord.*)
13. If you ask God to anoint someone with the Holy Spirit, what are you asking God to do? (To give that person supernatural power to

accomplish God’s will; that is, to give that person spiritual gifts so that he might be used by God for His purposes. For example, to give a person the power to make a good choice or to teach a sermon in a way that changes people’s hearts.)

14. What was David thinking when he said, “*My cup overflows?*” (On thinking about all that his Good Shepherd had done for him, his heart was so filled with the joy of the Lord, he was about to burst.)
15. What is at least one way God has blessed you and filled your heart with the joy of the Lord? (Wonderful family, warm beds to sleep in, food to eat, etc.)

[For more lessons for children, visit <https://www.freechildrensministrylessons.com>.]