

Anointed My Head with Oil

(Psalm 23:5b)

Pre-Session Warm Up

We've been learning the 23rd Psalm. So far, we've looked at the first four and 1/2 verses: *"The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters. He restores my soul. He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me. Your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies."*

We've learned that because the Lord is our shepherd, we have all that we need.

- He gives us peace and joy in our lives so that we might rest in the knowledge of His love and care for us.
- He quenches our inner thirst as we spend quiet time with Him reading His Word, praying, and worshipping Him.
- When our relationship with our Good Shepherd is broken, He tenderly and lovingly picks us up and restores us to a right relationship with Him.
- He guides us along the right paths in life so that our lives will bring honor to His name.
- When we walk through the dark valleys in our lives, we don't need to be afraid because our Good Shepherd is close by. He never stops leading and protecting us!
- He has given us the tools we need for life. Our "rod" is the Word of God which teaches us how to live a God-honoring life. And, our "staff" is the Holy Spirit, Who is our comforter and the One who leads us into all truth and gives us the power we need to live a sanctified life—set apart for God's use.

- He has gone before us to prepare a place for us! He has prepared the way for us to be forgiven of our sins so that we can live eternally with Him.

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.]

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? [Teacher, demonstrate or talk about each type of oil.]

- **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 and also for anointing.

In Bible times olive oil was used for medical purposes—they used it to clean cuts and wounds. The Bible tells us to anoint people who are sick and to pray for them.

To *anoint* means to *set apart objects or people for God's use*. In Bible times when someone invited a guest to their house they would anoint them with oil. They would put olive oil on their forehead to show them that they cared about them and thought they were very important.

David, who wrote Psalm 23, was a shepherd. So, when he wrote this Psalm, he was thinking of another use for the olive oil that we haven't

discussed yet. 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 head. 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 for his sheep over and over again.

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.

Life is full of pesky things beyond our control that can really "bug us." By allowing the Good Shepherd to anoint us, the presence of God's Spirit calms these irritations.

As we have been studying the 23rd 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.

God gave them many instructions about how He wanted them 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, it was a way to show everyone that they were special people, set aside to serve God.

Exodus 29:4-9

*"This is the ceremony you must follow when you consecrate Aaron and his sons to serve me as priests: Take a young bull and two rams with no defects. (2) Then, using choice wheat flour and no yeast, make loaves of bread, thin cakes mixed with olive oil, and wafers spread with oil. (3) Place them all in a single basket, and present them at the entrance of the Tabernacle, along with the young bull and the two rams. (4) "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 chestpiece. 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. (8) Next present his sons, and dress them in their tunics. (9) Wrap the sashes around the waists of Aaron and his sons, and put their special head coverings on them. Then the right to the priesthood will be theirs by law forever. In this way, you will ordain Aaron and his sons.

Another example of anointing was many years later...

The children of Israel had been in the Promised Land for a long time and Samuel, the last Judge, had been ruling over them.

1 Samuel 8:1-3

As Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons to be judges over Israel. (2) Joel and Abijah, his oldest sons, held court in Beersheba. (3) But they were not like their father, for they were greedy for money. They accepted bribes and perverted justice.

Samuel's sons were dishonest. They were greedy and accepted bribes and they did not uphold God's perfect law. So the elders went to Samuel to ask him for a king.

1 Samuel 8:4-5

Finally, all the elders of Israel met at Ramah to discuss the matter with Samuel. (5) "Look," they told him, "you are now old, and your sons are not like you. Give us a king to judge us like all the other nations have."

They knew that they didn't want Samuel's corrupt sons to rule over them. They thought they wanted a change.

Samuel tried to talk them out of wanting a king. He told them it won't be good for them at all.

1 Samuel 8:11

"This is how a king will reign over you," Samuel said. "The king will draft your sons and assign them to his chariots and his charioteers, making them run before his chariots.

Samuel went on to say that if they appoint a man to be king over them, he will tax them, use the money to keep a trained army and make their sons serve as soldiers. Then he will build himself a fancy house and take their sons and daughters for his slaves.

Samuel explained that it was going to be very hard on them to have a man rule over them as a king. But the people refused to listen.

1 Samuel 8:19-20

But the people refused to listen to Samuel's warning. "Even so, we still want a king," they said. (20) "We want to be like the nations around us. Our king will judge us and lead us into battle."

Have you ever made a wrong choice because you wanted to be like everyone else? Never let others pull you away from what God says is right. Because the children of Israel wanted to be like the unbelieving nations around them, they were heading for spiritual disaster.

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 9:15-17

*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." (17) When Samuel saw Saul, the LORD said, "That's the man I told you about! He will rule my people."*

The next day, Samuel told Saul that God had chosen him to be the king over all Israel. As Samuel spoke, he took the vial of oil and poured it over Saul's head to anoint him. Samuel kissed Saul and told him he was anointed to be King over Israel. [Teacher, take the doll and cover the head with oil demonstrating the anointing.]

Now we know that Saul did not turn out to be a very good king. So, God chose someone else to be the king.

1 Samuel 16:1

Now the LORD said to Samuel, "You have mourned long enough for Saul. I have rejected him as king of Israel, so fill your flask with olive oil and go to Bethlehem. Find a man named Jesse who lives there, for I have selected one of his sons to be My king."

God told Samuel to stop feeling so sad about the way things worked out for Saul; He had someone else in mind. And that made Samuel worried about how Saul would react to this.

1 Samuel 16:2-3

*But Samuel asked, "How can I do that? If Saul hears about it, he will kill me." "Take a heifer with you," the LORD replied, "and say that you have come to make a sacrifice to the LORD. (3) Invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will show you which of his sons to **anoint** for Me."*

God told Samuel to invite Jesse and his sons to a time of worship. Then He would show Samuel what to do from there. So, Samuel packed up and went to Bethlehem. He found Jesse and invited him and his seven sons to worship God with him.

One by one Jesse brought his sons before Samuel. Finally, they brought David to him and he knew that this was the one that God had chosen to be the next king over Israel.

1 Samuel 16:13

*So as David stood there among his brothers, Samuel took the flask of olive oil he had brought and **anointed** David with the oil.*



And the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon David from that day on. Then Samuel returned to Ramah.

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

When David was writing Psalm 23, he was reflecting on how wonderfully God protects us and cares for us. He said, "*You honor me by **anointing** my head with oil...*" (Psalm 23:5b)

He was thinking about when he, as a shepherd taking care of his flock 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 brings peace and joy into our lives.

In the same way that the oil protected the sheep from those pesky flies, the Holy Spirit can protect our minds from harm. When ungodly thoughts come into our mind, like when we want to butt heads with people, we need our minds renewed. We need to protect our thoughts and keep them on Godly things by asking for the anointing of the Holy Spirit so that our thoughts are not diseased, pestered, or damaged by something impure and unholy.

What are some "unholy" things that could damage or disease our thoughts? (Telling lies, watching "R" rated movies, following a bad example, like doing drugs.) What can you do to keep your thoughts pure?

Ephesians 4:23 says, "*...let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes.*" We need to allow the Holy Spirit to clean our thoughts.

My Cups Overflows

When David said, "*My cup overflows with blessings,*" he was speaking of God's abundant provision. David was reflecting upon how our Good Shepherd meets our every need. He gives us peace and joy, He quenches our inner thirst, He guides us along the right paths in life, and He comforts and protects us. He fills us with His blessings. 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.]

God gives us more than we need because He loves us. 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. How is oil a useful material?
2. How was oil useful to a shepherd?
3. What did oil do for the sheep?
4. What was Samuel to do with the oil for Saul?
5. What did it mean for Saul to be “anointed” with oil? [Teacher, please emphasize being set apart for service, protected, and equipped for a special work for God.]
6. What did the oil represent to Saul and still represents to us?