

THE FIRST 15

Tuesday, August 13, 2024

Today is Tuesday, August 13 and we are studying what the Bible says about anointing with oil.

OPENING PRAYER

I come to this quiet space and seek the presence of God, my gracious host - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. I still the rushing thoughts of my busy mind and focus on His presence. I calm my body and slow my breath. As I breathe deeply, I inhale God's gifts of healing, holiness, joy and peace and exhale any negative thoughts, worries or concerns. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Take the following fine spices: 500 shekels of liquid myrrh, half as much of fragrant cinnamon, 250 shekels of fragrant calamus, 500 shekels of cassia—all according to the sanctuary shekel—and a hin of olive oil. Make these into a sacred anointing oil, a fragrant blend, the work of a perfumer. It will be the sacred anointing oil. Then use it to anoint the tent of meeting, the ark of the covenant law, the table and all its articles, the lampstand and its accessories, the altar of incense, the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and the basin with its stand. You shall consecrate them so they will be most holy, and whatever touches them will be holy. Anoint Aaron and his sons and consecrate them so they may serve me as priests. Say to the Israelites, 'This is to be my sacred anointing oil for the generations to come.'" Exodus 30:22-31

REFLECTION

I take a deep breath. As I inhale, I can almost smell the beautiful fragrant aroma of the sacred oil. This holy anointing oil was made with the finest of spices, myrrh, cinnamon, calamus and cassia mixed in pure olive oil. The formula was known only to the priests. The oil was ordained by God and used to consecrate the items of worship in the Tabernacle as well as the priest Aaron and his sons. As we consider all the uses for oil in the Bible, one is consecration. The word "consecration" comes from the Latin *consecrare* which means "to make holy."

God calls us to holiness. Peter reminds us (1 Peter 1:16) that in the book of Leviticus God commands, "Be holy for I am holy." No matter how hard we try, we cannot make ourselves holy. We will never attain holiness by our own efforts and in our own power. God's Holy Spirit has the power to make us holy – we call that sanctification. Sanctification happens over time as we give ourselves more and more to the power of the Holy Spirit and allow God to work in our hearts and lives. If you desire to grow in holiness, ask God to make you more holy through the power of the Holy Spirit and open yourself to the blessing of God's sanctifying grace.

Aaron and his sons were consecrated by God and marked with the fragrant holy oil. They were set apart as God's leaders to serve His people. They were made holy, not by what they did in their own power, but by what God did in His power. I am made holy in the same way, by the anointing of God through the Holy Spirit. I cannot grow in holiness and mature in the faith by my own doing, it is only through the grace of Almighty God. Holiness is something I receive. I can

ask for it, be open to it and cooperate with God's work in me, but ultimately it is a gift of God lavished upon me like the finest fragrant oil.

Ask: How might I invite the Holy Spirit to come and anoint me today? How can I better cooperate with the Spirit's work of holiness in me - in my heart and in my life?

Pause and Pray

CLOSING PRAYER

Come, Holy Spirit, pour out Your sanctifying grace and renew me in Your love. I am aware of Your sweet presence in this place and I bow to humbly ask You to work Your way in me. Forgive me when I try to attain holiness in my own power, continually struggle to make myself better on my own, repeatedly fail to make progress, consistently find myself going in the wrong direction and often become discouraged. Remind me to let go and give myself and my circumstances over to You. Anoint me in the name of Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.