

Oil of Gladness – Pour It On!

Even those of us who do little cooking are familiar with the acrostic, EV00 – Extra Virgin Olive Oil. It has great use in healthy cooking and possesses proven health benefits related to cholesterol and CV disease.

The use of olive oil for anointing purposes throughout biblical history is well-documented. (Anointing typically means pouring over someone's head.) We first see this used on Aaron (the brother of Moses and first high priest (Exodus 30)). David, the shepherd boy who became King, used this well-known phrase in his most eloquent psalm. *"Thou anointest my head with oil."* (Psalm 23: 5). I imagine its greatest use was anointing Jesus' body for burial (olive oil and spices).

There is another reference to the use of oil for anointing that grabs my attention every time I read two passages of Scripture where we find it—***the oil of gladness***. The first use is found in a beautiful, messianic psalm.

you have loved righteousness and hated wickedness. Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions; (Psalm 45: 7 ESV)

The writer of the book of Hebrews began by diving immediately into the fact that Jesus is God's answer for mankind. He quoted these verses from Psalm 45 in Hebrews 1: 8-9. Jesus was anointed with the oil of gladness.

The second use occurs in Isaiah 61: 1-3. This chapter also contains promises of God, reassuring the Israelites He would deliver them from their sufferings and captivity in the future. These verses also contain great messianic prophecy. Jesus read parts of this passage when He first taught in the synagogue in His hometown of Nazareth. (He did not quote verse 3.)

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me because the LORD has anointed me, to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, and freedom to prisoners...to grant those who mourn *in* Zion, giving them a garland instead of ashes, ***the oil of gladness instead of mourning,***"

Gladness. Perhaps when I give you my definition of that word, you will understand and even share, my conviction concerning this powerful anointing. Webster may disagree, but the Holy Spirit has impressed upon mine that...

"gladness is the absence of whining and the presence of joy".

I can be a real whiner sometimes. My wife has even asked (sarcastically) if I want some cheese with my "whine"! This year I am committed to experiencing more of the joy of the Lord, so ***His oil of gladness can pour over me*** and, just maybe, touch those with whom I come in contact.

Walter