

Our Anointing from God

***“You have an
anointing from
the Holy one; you
all know it.”***

—John 2:20,

*Wilson’s Emphatic
Diaglott*

IN THE HEBREW LAN-

guage of the Old Testament, the word *mashach* means “to anoint,” and is used to describe the holy anointing oil as it was utilized in the Tabernacle arrangement. The word Messiah, which means “anointed one,” is also derived from *mashach*. This word corresponds in the New Testament to the Greek word *chrio*, from which comes *Christos*—translated “Christ,” likewise meaning “anointed one.” During Old Testament times, the Israelites, at the Lord’s direction, ceremonially anointed priests and rulers. This constituted the confirmation of their appointment to office with God’s favor. Aaron was anointed as high priest after his appointment to that office. (Lev. 8:12) Samuel anointed Saul as king over Israel after God had designated him as his choice. (I Sam. 10:1) David was anointed as king on three different occasions.—I Sam. 16:13; II Sam. 2:4; 5:3

The sacred anointing oil was also used to anoint the Tabernacle and its furnishings, indicating that

they were dedicated as holy things. In the Law that God gave to Moses, he prescribed a formula for the anointing oil. It was of special composition, consisting of precise measurements of choice ingredients—myrrh, sweet cinnamon, sweet calamus, cassia, and olive oil. (Exod. 30:22-33) It was a capital offense for anyone to create or use this special compound for any unauthorized purpose. This effectively demonstrated the importance and sacredness of an appointment to office that had been confirmed by an anointing with the holy oil.

The anointing of Israel's priests and kings prefigured God's appointment of Jesus as the long-promised Messiah, or anointed one, who would deliver his people. One of the beautiful prophecies concerning the Messiah is found in these words of Isaiah: "The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD. . . . With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins."—Isa. 11:2-5

JESUS' ANOINTING

Jesus was anointed at the time of his baptism in the river Jordan. He was not anointed with oil, but with what the holy anointing oil represented—the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist confirmed the anointing of Jesus, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him." (John 1:32) At the beginning of his ministry, Jesus quoted a

portion of a prophecy concerning himself: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord."—Luke 4:18,19; Isa. 61:1,2

Jesus is the anointed "Christ," and, according to the scriptural testimony, he was faithful unto death in carrying out the Heavenly Father's instructions. Because of this, he was highly exalted. (Phil. 2:5-11; Heb. 5:8-10) However, Jesus was not the completion of the divine arrangement regarding the anointed. The Heavenly Father further purposed that his Son should be the head of an anointed body called "the church." The Apostle Paul states that God "hath put all things under his [Christ's] feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." "For we are members of his body. . . . For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."—Eph. 1:22,23; 5:30-32

The fact that "the Christ" was to be composed of many members was a mystery and was not made known until after the First Advent of Jesus. The Apostle John, speaking to a group of the Lord's followers, said, "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in

him.” (I John 2:27) The revelation of this mystery could not take place until after Jesus’ death and resurrection, so that the merit of his offering might be made applicable to all who desired to become members of his body. This was necessary to make them an acceptable sacrifice and prospective members of his body.—Eph. 1:3-7; Col. 1:18-22

ANOINTING OF THE CHURCH

There were a number of Jesus’ followers, including the apostles, who believed the testimony of Jesus that if they would take up their cross and follow him, they would also be privileged to share in his glory. (Matt. 16:24) However, they could not receive the anointing or understand its meaning until he had made satisfaction for their sins. “Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” (Heb. 9:24) Therefore, the Lord instructed his disciples to wait in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit should come upon them. Ten days after his ascension, on the Day of Pentecost, the promised anointing came from the Father through Christ.—Luke 24:46-49; John 14:26; Acts 1:4,5,8-14; 2:1-36

In the case of the disciples who received the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, they were given special gifts as outward evidence of their anointing. The Lord deemed this necessary because it was an entirely new arrangement, not previously understood or appreciated even by the disciples. The ability to speak in “other tongues”—or known languages—was a miracle, and was necessary at that time for the dissemination of the Gospel to many nations,

since there was no other media except word of mouth. “Every man heard them speak in his own language.” (Acts 2:6) Also associated with the anointing was an enlightenment of mind to the meaning of many Scriptures. This was wonderfully demonstrated by Peter’s sermon which followed his being filled with the Holy Spirit. Later, other gifts were given to the apostles, such as the ability to heal and cast out devils. These and other powers were given for the purpose of giving evidence that the authority for their ministry came from God, and they also served as illustrations of the wonderful works that would be done in the future kingdom of Christ. These special “gifts” of the Spirit came to an end with the death of the apostles, because the ministry of the Gospel was, by then, well established.

The footstep followers of Jesus down through the Gospel Age have received the same anointing of the Holy Spirit, except that the power to perform miracles has been withheld because there is no longer any need for this demonstration of divine power. Like the disciples, however, they all have experienced the wonderful enlightenment of mind which has led them from the darkness of this world into the marvelous light of the Gospel of Christ.—I Pet. 2:9

ANOINTING VERSUS BEGETTING

The New Testament describes the gift of the Holy Spirit as an “anointing” and also as a “begetting.” The thought of the anointing has to do with office, as was true in the Old Testament types. During the Gospel Age, we are “called in one hope” of our calling. (Eph. 4:4) The apostle further states, concerning himself and all footstep followers of Jesus, that they

are to “press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 3:14) The “prize of the high calling of God” is the “divine nature” and the privilege to live and reign with Christ in his kingdom for a thousand years. (II Pet. 1:4; Matt. 19:28; Rev. 20:4,6) Our anointing to this special office is conditioned upon obedience. “If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him.” (II Tim. 2:11,12) Associated with our anointing is a second work of the Holy Spirit that occurs simultaneously, which is referred to in the Scriptures as a begetting. Both the anointing and begetting of the Holy Spirit are limited to those whom God has called and accepted.

Whereas the anointing has to do with the office to which we have been called, the begetting of the Holy Spirit is the means by which our lives become conformed, day by day, to the example set before us in Christ Jesus. Thus, Spirit begetting makes possible a profound change in our life as a consecrated believer. We cannot describe in words what has taken place, and the change is unobservable to our friends and neighbors, except as it makes itself manifest by our interest in and dedication to the Truth. It is enough for us to recognize, however, that God, by his Holy Spirit, has given our minds the ability to discern spiritual things, enabling us to extract from his Word “the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory.” (I Cor. 2:7-14) The Apostle Paul, in his prayer on behalf of the brethren at Ephesus, prayed that God, through the Holy Spirit, “may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know

what is the hope of his calling.” (Eph. 1:17,18) This is the purpose of our begetting of the Holy Spirit, and those who are favored to know and who truly appreciate their calling will be obedient to its terms.

HOLY ANOINTING OIL

In harmony with the foregoing, let us consider the holy anointing oil used in the typical arrangements of Israel. When a king or a priest was anointed, it pictured his divine authority to occupy that office. Associated with the anointing was the ability to receive instruction from God. Aaron, Israel’s first high priest, was anointed by Moses, who gave him instructions from God as to his service. (Lev. 8:30) Concerning these instructions, God said that he gave them to Moses “mouth to mouth, even apparently [by a vision], and not in dark speeches.” (Num. 12:8) All the instructions given to Moses, to be passed on to various anointed servants, were to enable them to accomplish the work God had for them to do.

This seems to have been especially true of Bezaleel, who was commissioned by God to build the Tabernacle with all of its furnishings. It was necessary that it be built exactly according to God’s instructions, so that in the future it would cast a proper “shadow” or type for the benefit of the Gospel Age church. (Heb. 8:5) Concerning Bezaleel, the account states, “I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, To devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, And in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship.” (Exod. 31:3-5) It has been suggested that these qualities—wisdom,

understanding, knowledge, and workmanship—are the same qualities that the begetting of the Holy Spirit imparts to one begotten at the present time. In addition, these four qualities might be well represented by the four ingredients—myrrh, sweet cinnamon, calamus, and cassia—which were added to the olive oil in the making of the holy anointing oil.

In the formula given to Moses for the preparation of the holy anointing oil, recorded in Exodus 30:22-25, we note that the quantities of sweet cinnamon and calamus are the same—two hundred and fifty shekels each. This suggests that these two ingredients might well represent “knowledge” and “understanding.” Knowledge is factual information, and we get this from our study of the Word of God. Then, because of the begetting of the Holy Spirit, our minds are enlightened and we are given spiritual discernment of the will of God, as embodied in the knowledge gained. This spiritual discernment can be likened to understanding with the heart. Thus, knowledge and understanding work hand in hand with each other, and are of corresponding importance.

Next we note that the quantity of myrrh—five hundred shekels—was equal to the combined measures of cinnamon and calamus. Myrrh would seem to represent “wisdom,” which takes the knowledge and understanding we have gained and translates them into decisions concerning the Lord’s will in our life. Spiritual wisdom enables us to see things from God’s point of view, rather than by the “foolish . . . wisdom of this world.” (I Cor. 1:20) The final ingredient of the holy anointing oil was cassia—five hundred shekels—which could well represent the quality of “workmanship.” For consecrated believers,

workmanship has to do with the ability to perform or accomplish that which God would have us to do.—Eph. 2:10

In Isaiah 11:2-5, previously quoted, the prophet states that the Spirit of the Lord would rest upon Jesus, the Messiah, and that he would manifest the qualities of wisdom, knowledge, and understanding. He would also have upon him, Isaiah says, the spirit of “counsel and might,” which conveys the same meaning as workmanship—that is, the knowledge and ability to perform. In another inspired prophecy about the Messiah, the psalmist wrote, “Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.”—Ps. 45:7,8

THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Apostle Paul, speaking of the work of the Holy Spirit in his epistle to the brethren at Colosse, said, “Because of this also, we, from the day we heard it, do not cease praying on your behalf, that you may be filled, as to the exact knowledge of his will, with all spiritual wisdom and understanding; to walk worthily of the Lord, pleasing him in all things; bringing forth fruit by every good work, and increasing in the exact knowledge of God.” (Col. 1:9,10, *Emphatic Diaglott*) The burden of the apostle’s prayer was the desire that the brethren might completely yield themselves to the power of the Holy Spirit, as it worked in their lives through the Word of God. If this was done, he said, they would walk worthy of the Lord, and please him in all things.

The “good work” spoken of by the apostle is the same type of work that occupied Jesus during his earthly ministry. It consisted of preaching the Gospel, going about doing good to all with whom he came in contact, and laying his life down in serving his disciples. In performing faithfully such works, there is a beneficial outgrowth—the development of the fruits and graces of the Spirit. Of Jesus, the Apostle Paul states, that “though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.” (Heb. 5:8) His difficult and trying experiences resulted from doing good works. Jesus was a light in a dark place, and he testified that “darkness . . . hateth the light.” (John 3:19,20)

The Apostle Paul described Jesus as one who “endured such contradiction [opposition] of sinners against himself,” and that we should “consider him,” lest we “be wearied and faint” in our minds. (Heb. 12:3) Indeed, opposition and ridicule will also be the lot of all the anointed of God if they faithfully follow in the footsteps of their head, Christ Jesus. They can be more than overcomers, not by their own strength, but only by the power and influence of the Holy Spirit.

Let us have an ever increasing appreciation of the illustrations and instructions God has given in his Word with regard to our anointing. May they help us discern our relationship to him and to some extent understand how the power of the Holy Spirit works in us to bring forth the fruitage he desires, which will ultimately qualify us for a place in his kingdom. What a rich blessing is ours to know, as stated in our opening text, that we have an “anointing from the Holy one”—our loving God and Heavenly Father! ■