

Anointing Oil

Biblical Use for Consecration, Prayer, Healing & Worship

TERMINOLOGY: To be “anointed” is, among other things, to be made sacred (consecrated); to be set apart and dedicated to serve God; to be imparted with enabling gifts and grace; to be divinely designated, inaugurated, or chosen for some purpose. We know this subject is important to God because the words *anoint*, *anointed*, and *anointing* appear in more than 150 Spirit inspired Bible verses, including 22 New Testament scriptures. Indeed, the English word *anoint* derives from the ancient Latin *inunctus*, meaning “smear with oil”.

CONNECTION TO OIL: The *Bible Dictionary* mentions only two types of anointing: **with oil or the Holy Ghost**. In short, *anointing* and *oil* are much more integrally related than most people realize, which explains why Bible translators sometimes use *anoint* and *oil* interchangeably as synonymous verbs (e.g., Isa. 21:5).

THE ANOINTED ONE: Both the ancient Hebrew form of *Messiah* and the ancient Greek form of *Christ* literally mean “anointed”; thus, “Jesus Christ” is more accurately rendered “Jesus the Anointed” (or as “Jesus, the Anointed One”, or “Jesus, His Anointed”). This is one of the reasons our Savior first publicly announced Himself as the divine Messiah [\[Luke 4:18\]](#) by quoting [Isaiah 61:1](#): “The Spirit of *Adonai ELOHIM* is upon me, because *ADONAI* has *anointed* me...” It’s why Peter and John and the followers with them, inspired by the Holy Spirit, publicly refer to Jesus (*Yeshua*) as the “Anointed One” [Acts 4:26, NIV] and NKJ, NIV, and NAS Biblical versions translate: “Your holy Servant Jesus, whom you *anointed*”.

WHY FRAGRANT OIL: God is obviously a lover of sweet smelling fragrances and perfumes, words (or forms of them) which appear in Scripture 41 times and 35 times, respectively. Spices – in the context of anointing oils, perfume, food, and incense – are mentioned throughout the Bible: 16 verses containing *frankincense*, 17 with *myrrh*, five with *spikenard*, and many others featuring *cinnamon*, *cassia*, *calamus*, *camphor*, *stacte*, *aloes*, *onycha*, *cedar*, *honey*, *hyssop*, *henna*, *mandrakes*, *pomegranates*, *lilies*, *roses*, and *saffron*. Our faith is deepened and we are enriched and brought closer to God as we begin to study and understand the spiritual meaning of these exotic biblical fragrances.

FIRST SCRIPTURAL REFERENCE: The great Hebrew patriarch Jacob (divinely renamed “Israel”) makes a sacred vow to God after *anointing a stone pillar by pouring oil on top of it* [\[Gen. 28:16-22; 31:13; 35:14\]](#). Jacob names the pillar’s locale “Bethel” (or *BeitEl*, meaning “House of God. The editors of the *Ryrie Study Bible* comment that by pouring this anointing oil, Jacob “consecrated” the pillar, thereby rendering it an altar holy unto God.

THE HOLY ANOINTING OIL: In Exodus chapter 30, the LORD tells Moses to make a very special and “holy anointing oil” of “the finest of spices”, including “flowing (liquid) myrrh”, “sweet smelling cinnamon”, “fragrant cane”, “cassia”, and “olive oil”. This highly perfumed oil was used to consecrate (set apart) the articles used in Temple worship, including the ark of the testimony, the holy tabernacle, and all its furnishings, which made them “Holy” (Kadosh in Hebrew) unto the Lord. This word Kadosh, meaning “set apart”, Yahweh gives an admonition NOT to reproduce the exact formula or use it on ordinary humans. (We do not attempt in any way to reproduce this formula).

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THE LAMPSTAND: In Biblical times light was usually provided by oil lamps (or *menorahs*, a Hebrew word translated “lampstands”, “lamps”, or, less accurately, “candlesticks”). Often made of clay, brass, silver, or gold, these simple “lamps” slowly burned oil typically olive oil. This explains scriptures such as [Exodus 27:20](#) (“...order the people of Israel to bring you pure oil of pounded olives for the light, to keep a lamp burning continually”); [Exodus 35:14](#) (“...the *menorah* for the light, ... and the oil for the light, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense...”); and [Exodus 35:28](#) (“...oil for the light, and for the anointing oil...”). It also deepens our understanding of the parable of the wise and foolish virgins [\[Matt. 25:1-12\]](#).

PRIESTS: In *Exodus*, the LORD identifies anointing oil is an acceptable *offering* unto Him [Exo. 25:6]. Furthermore, He directs that Aaron and his sons be anointed, consecrated, and sanctified as holy priests to minister unto Him [\[Exo. 28:41\]](#) and that Aaron be anointed as Israel’s High Priest through the pouring of anointing oil on his head and garments [\[Exo. 29:7,21,29\]](#). ([Psalm 133:1-2](#) compare harmonious brotherhood to “fragrant oil on the head that runs down over the beard of Aaron...”).

KINGS: In Scripture’s first *kingly* anointing, the prophet Samuel pours oil on the head of King Saul [\[1Sa. 10:1\]](#).

DAVID’S ANOINTING: David, the “man after God’s own heart”, is officially anointed with oil (by others) not once but *three* times [\[1Sa. 16:12-13; 2Sa. 2:4; 2Sa. 5:3\]](#). In [Psalm 23:5](#), he says to God, “*You* anoint my head with oil.” This is confirmed by Psalm 89:20-21, wherein God declares, “*I* have found David my servant and anointed him with My holy oil. My hand will always be with him.” In addition, David *anoints himself* while trying to shake off grief over the death of his child and just before entering the Temple to worship God [\[1Sa. 12:20\]](#).

QUEEN ESTHER & OIL OF MYRRH: In Esther’s era any Queen to be had to undergo a year of preparations prior to coronation [\[Est. 2:3, 6-13\]](#). Esther underwent “a six month treatment with *oil of myrrh* and six months with perfumes and other aloes”. One translation states it as “...with *olive oil and myrrh*...” In ancient times, the average woman’s perfume **was** her anointing oil.

MARY OF BETHANY & SPIKENARD OIL: One of Scripture’s most poignant, bittersweet scenes [\[Mat. 26:61-3; Mark 14:39; John 12:35\]](#) memorializes Mary of Bethany: A woman with an alabaster jar filled with very expensive perfume (pure spikenard oil worth an average laborer’s annual wage) approaches *Yeshua*, breaks the jar, and begins pouring the precious oil over His head and feet. As the house fills with the oil’s pungent fragrance, the Lord says to those nearby: “She has done a beautiful thing for me...She poured this perfume on me to prepare my body for burial...I tell you that throughout the whole world...what she has done will be told in her memory.” Obviously, our Lord was deeply touched by Mary’s unselfish, thoughtful, heartfelt, sacrificial expression of devotion and profound love. Some Bible commentators deem Mary’s faithful act as the utmost example of what God desires in believers.

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FRANKINCENSE & MYRRH: The “Magi from the east” honored the child Messiah with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh [[Mat.2:11](#)]. The gospels recount that before his death, Yeshua (Jesus) was offered myrrh mixed with wine, which he refused, and that after his death his body was treated with “a mixture of myrrh and aloes.” Frankincense comes to be associated with Christ’s role as our intercessor (the bowl of incense in [Rev 5:8](#) is frankincense, representing the prayers of the saints), myrrh with his suffering and death. In Song of Songs the writer refers to the bridegroom (Yeshua) as “who is He coming in a pillar of smoke smelling of myrrh & frankincense?” Many have suggested that the gold, frankincense, and myrrh represent the three roles of Yeshua respectively: King, Priest and Prophet.

FRAGRANCE OF MESSIAH: The apostle Paul writes: “...thanks be to God, who in the Messiah constantly leads us in a triumphal procession and through us spreads everywhere the *fragrance* of what it means to know Him! For to God we are the aroma of the Messiah, both among those being saved and among those being lost; to the latter, we are the smell of death leading only to more death; but to the former, we are the sweet smell of life leading to more life [[2Co. 2:14-16](#)].”

YESHUA(JESUS)’ COMMAND: According to Revelation 3:18 (NAS), *Yeshua* Himself says to the believing community in Laodicea: “I advise you to buy from Me gold...white garments...and *eye salve to anoint your eyes*, that you may see.” Speaking of “white garments”, consider the advice of King Solomon: “Always be clothed in white, and always *anoint your head with oil* [[Ecc. 9:8, NIV](#)].”

BELIEVERS ARE ANOINTED: Believers are “in *Yeshua*”(Jesus) and He is “in us”; thus we, too, have been and are divinely anointed, as affirmed by both [2Corinthians 1:21-22](#) (“...it is God who sets...us...in firm union with the Messiah; He has **anointed** us, put His seal on us, and given us His Spirit”) and [1John 2:20, 27](#) (“...you have received the Messiah’s **anointing**...the Messianic **anointing** you received from the Father remains in you...His Messianic anointing continues to teach you about all things...so remain united with Him.”). So, whether or not you use anointing oil, you’re already one of God’s anointed!

OTHERS CAN & SHOULD BE ANOINTED: Some believe oil should be used to anoint *only* kings and priests; according to Scripture, however, believers in *Yeshua* as the divine Son of God and as their Savior and Lord *are* “priests” [[1Pe. 2:5,9](#)]; they *are* kings (by virtue of having the *King* of Kings “in them” [Gal. 2:20]); and they may justifiably view their being anointed with oil as a *physical manifestation* of their being filled continuously with the Holy Spirit [[1Jn. 2:20](#); [2Co. 1:21-22](#)]. (Indeed, according to most Bible scholars, in God’s Word anointing oil typically symbolizes the Holy Spirit.) Furthermore, “ordinary” ancient Israelites anointed themselves and each other with oil [[Ruth 3:3](#); [2Ch. 28:15](#); [Dan. 10:3](#); [Amos 6:6](#)], and the *B’rit Hadashah* (*Hebrew for New Covenant*) actually *directs* “ordinary believers” to do this [[Mat. 6:17](#); [James 5:14](#)].

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WHY & WHEN TO USE BIBLICAL FRAGRANT OIL TODAY:

- As an act of consecration and dedication, a setting apart for a special purpose in God's kingdom. Consider anointing yourself every morning, praying scriptures over your mind, heart, ears, eyes, hands and feet. It **WILL** change your day!!
- As the Priests of the home, husbands are encouraged to anoint their wives and children for consecration, protection, peace, pronouncing a blessing upon them as did the Fathers of Old!!
- As a preparation to bible study, devotional time, fasting, and praise and worship
- In times of sickness, fear, anxiety, oppression of the enemy, end of mourning, ALSO in footwashing
- ceremonies
- As bath oil—the olive oil is great for your skin and the fragrance is divine!

BIBLICAL FRAGRANCES AND THEIR SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE

- **Frankincense:** used on the Altar of Incense in temple times, one of the 3 gifts brought to Messiah (intercession)
- **Myrrh:** Queen Esther bathed in oil of myrrh for six months before her presentation to the King (purification, dying to self, and preparation for the KING)
- **"Holy Fire"/Hyssop:** exotic Biblical plant used in religious rituals of the Hebrews (cleansing, purification)
- **Cedars of Lebanon:** fragrant wood used to build Temple, also to anoint a restored leper's house (strength, permanence, wholeness, restoration)
- **Pomegranate:** highly prized fruit mentioned in numerous scriptures motif used to decorate temple, embroidered on high priest's garment (fruitfulness, abundance, blessings, favor of God)
- **Spikenard:** fragrant oil used by Mary to anoint head & feet of Jesus (intimacy, extravagant worship)
- **Rose of Sharon:** flower depicting the beloved (beauty)
- **Lily of the Valley:** white delicate flower (honor & purity of heart)