THOU ANOINTEST MY HEAD WITH OIL

**DATE: 10/13/2013 am**

**TEXT: Psalm 23:5b**

**INTRODUCTION**

**Song:** It was a bright June morning in 1872, when a young mother, by the name of Annie Hawks became filled with a sense of the nearness of God. As she enjoyed this special sense of His presence she began thinking about how anyone could live without the Lord. Suddenly, the words *“I need Thee every hour”* came to mind. It was from that experience that she wrote the great hymn, *I Need Thee Every Hour: I need Thee, O I need Thee, Every hour I need Thee! O bless me now my, my Saviour – I come to Thee!*

As we continue to look at the **23rd Psalm** and how to Face the Days Ahead

I hope we are seeing that we need the Lord

Like Annie Hawks, I don’t know how anyone can face life without the Lord

As for me, I would not want to face life without the Lord

When I look back over my life, and think about what could have been

And not knowing what might be ahead,

I’m thankful and rejoice that I’m able to say with David,

***“The LORD is my Shepherd”***

The **23rd Psalm** not only Reminds us that we Need the Lord,

But it also Reminds us that the Lord is all we Need

… Especially when it comes to facing the days ahead

You may recall that when we began this series …

I stated that the **23rd Psalm** consisted of 118 words and 116 of which, explain the first two

Once declaring what the Psalm is all about, ***“The LORD”***

… David then begins to describe what the Lord means to him as His Shepherd

All through this Psalm David has drawn Picture after Picture and Analogy after Analogy of what the Lord, his Shepherd, has meant to him

- David has spoken of the Lord as the One who Fills his life that he is able to say, ***“I shall not want”***

- He speaks of how the Lord has Led him throughout his life,

Leading him to Green Pastures, beside Still Waters and in Paths of Righteousness

- He has described how the Lord has both Provided for, and Protected him in every experience of life

In short, David is telling us how to face all the days ahead?

He is saying - *“The Lord is all you need”*

Yet, as I listen to David’s testimony, I not only find him declaring what the Lord has meant to him

… But also describing what he means to the Lord

**Psalm 23** is not only a testimony of David’s feelings about the Lord

It is also a testimony of the Lord’s feelings for all His Children

Why does the Lord Lead us, Feed us, and Meet our every need?

It’s because of how He feels about us

All through this Psalm we see how the Lord feels about His children

… Especially when we come to the words in **v. 5b –**

***“Thou anointest my head with oil”***

In this act, done by the shepherd, we see how deep the Lord’s feelings are for His sheep

They describe an action that is very personal and reveal the feelings the Lord has for each sheep of his flock

In the very beginning David spoke of his relationship with the Lord as a *personal* relationship

When he said, ***“The LORD is my Shepherd”***

It is more than a relationship with the flock as a whole

We see that the Lord’s relationship with us is on an individual level

It is a relationship with each sheep in the flock

Let’s pray and then look at that thought -

***“Thou anointest my head with oil”***

**~~~Prayer~~~**

First, we see -

**I. THE LORD’S “INTIMACY”**

The Lord’s Intimacy with each of His sheep

***“Thou anointest my head with oil”***

He’s talking about a close Personal Relationship

The scene here is at the end of the day

The shepherd is bringing his sheep back to the sheepfold

The sheepfold was an enclosure where the sheep were kept during the night

Unlike a cowboy herding cattle into a corral,

The shepherd brings his sheep into the sheepfold one by one

It is a scene that reminds us of the Lord’s concern with each of his sheep

Let me describe the scene in two ways

First, the shepherd -

**A. Counts His Sheep each Night**

In a previous study we thought about the shepherd’s Rod

***“thy rod and thy staff they comfort me”***

The shepherd used the Rod to Protect his sheep

At other times he used it in dealing with the Stubborn and Disobedient sheep

The Rod was not only an instrument of Defense and Discipline

… It was also used in Numbering or Counting the sheep

We read in **Leviticus 27:32 - *“And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord”***

According to this, God required a tithe of the flock or herd

The shepherd would dip his rod in some sort of coloring and mark every 10th sheep

Thus marking that one as the one to be given to the LORD for sacrificial purposes

These sheep are spoken of as ***“passing under the rod”***

We also read in **Ezekiel 20:37 - *“And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant”***

This time we see God’s people ***“passing under the rod”***

What is meant by sheep passing under the rod?

At the end of the day, as the shepherd brought his sheep into the sheepfold

He would stand at the entrance with his rod raised

Counting the sheep one by one

This was called ***“passing under the rod”***

If he had 100 sheep and only 99 entered the sheepfold,

He would immediately go in search of that one lost sheep

**Luke 15** gives us the wonderful account of the shepherd going into the wilderness to find the one lost sheep and searching until he finds it

How did the shepherd know that one of his sheep was missing?

They ***“passed under the rod”***

He counted them each and every night

The shepherd was very aware of each and every sheep

Furthermore we see that the shepherd not only

**Counted each one of his sheep**

But he also -

**B. Calls His Sheep by Name**

The shepherd is very familiar with each individual sheep in his flock

In many cases each had a name or nickname

The names the shepherd choose were not simple common names

Rather, they were names that had some bearing upon the history of the individual sheep

As the sheep enter the sheepfold at evening you might hear the shepherd saying …

- *“Hi there, one born in the dry river bed”*

- *“There’s my lamb for which I traded two pots of honey”*

- *“There you are, the one the bear tried to steal”*

This is pictured in **John 10:3** where we read –

***“the sheep hear His voice: and He calleth His own sheep by name, and leadeth them out”***

**Quote:** Phillip Keller writes - *“The relationship between the shepherd and the sheep, between Christ and those whom He calls, is one of personal, profound knowing; for He knows me intimately, He knows me by name"*

This scene of the sheep being brought into the sheepfold reminds us that the Lord is personally acquainted with each one of His children

If you are saved, you are a member of a large family

(Or to stay with our picture) a sheep in a large flock

In **Revelation 7:9** John described a heavenly host clothed in white robes and palms in their hands

This host is made up of ***“all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues”***

John described this host as a multitude that no man could number

Who is that heavenly host?

It is every person saved by God’s grace

It is a host that will be made up of you and I

We belong to a spiritual family or flock that is made up of people of every race and nation – a multitude that no man can number

Yet, I remind you that God knows everyone of His children on an individual basis

You are not just a number on a computer

When I got saved I was not entered into heaven’s data base as convert number such & such

To God we are more than a huge flock

We are individuals that are known by name

***“He calleth His own sheep by name”***

I can assure you that God has no trouble knowing who you are

He is personally acquainted with each of His children and knows each of us by name!

Let these words sink into your heart

HE KNOWS YOU! HE EVEN KNOWS YOU BY NAME!

**THE LORD’S “INTIMACY”**

Secondly, we see in this scene -

**II. THE LORD’S “ATTENTION”**

The Lord’s Attention to each of His Sheep

David said - ***“Thou anointest my head with oil”***

As the sheep entered the sheepfold one by one,

He not only Counted them and Called them by name,

But he also took time to Examine each one

The shepherd will examine his sheep for briars in the ears, snags on the cheek, thorn wounds in the side, stone bruises on the knees, eyes inflamed by dust or flies, weariness and sickness

In this action by the shepherd we see -

**A. The Hurts He Attends**

During the day, there are all kinds of ways the sheep can get hurt, wounded, or made sick

They can pick up briars, get scratched, bruised, or become weary and ill

There are the fears from the predators that come near

In Our journey of life there are all kind of ways we can get hurt

Life has many ways of bruising and wounding us

Sometimes life itself can leave us weary and sick in heart

- Does the shepherd ignore these hurts?

- Does the shepherd pay no attention to the scratches, wounds, hurts and ailments of his sheep?

Absolutely not!

There is not a day that goes by that he does not pay attention to each of his sheep’s hurts

Our Lord is no different

Our hurts do not go unnoticed

He is aware each time our heart has been broken

He knows every pain we bear and every burden we carry

He not only knows us, but He knows everything about us – even the hurts we experience

If the shepherd found that one of his sheep had been wounded or hurt during the day,

He would attend to that wound

**The Hurts He Attends**

So, How would he Attend to the wounds?

We see this in -

**B. The Healing He Applies**

The shepherd always carried with him a bottle of oil

- When he found one of his sheep with a scratch, he would pour oil over it

- If there was a wound, he would rub the oil in

- If the sheep had suffered from the heat, he would rub its head down with oil

The oil had medicinal qualities about it that would speed healing and prevent infection

When David spoke of the Lord anointing his head with oil,

He was speaking of how the Lord attended to his hurts by applying the oil

Oil is symbolic of the presents of the Holy Spirit

The Lord knows our hurts and He applies the oil of heaven to our wounds

Many have experienced the hurts, wounds, and bruises of life and have found that the Lord always has oil to apply to those hurts

Just as the shepherd daily attended to the hurts of his sheep,

The Lord daily attends our hurts

- His oil brings healing to the broken hearted

- His oil gives grace in the time of need

- His oil soothes the troubled heart

- His oil eases the pain we feel

- His oil gives strength for the next day

The Lord has oil for your hurts

**John 14:26 – *“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost”***

You are His child and He knows you and all that is going on in your life

He knows just what you need and with David you can say when hurting, ***“Thou anointest my head with oil”***

**THE LORD’S “INTIMACY”**

**THE LORD’S “ATTENTION”**

What do these actions of the shepherd mean to us?

Think with me in closing of -

**III. THE LORD’S “AFFECTION”**

The Lord’s Affection for each of His sheep

- We’ve seen the shepherd every evening causing his sheep to pass under his rod

- We’ve heard the shepherd as he calls each sheep by name

- We’ve seen him as he examines each sheep and applies the oil to those who are wounded and hurt

What do we see in all this for us?

We see -

**A. How Interested He is in Each Sheep**

There is not one sheep in the flock that is not important to the shepherd

There is not one sheep for which he does not have great interest

They are all important to him, down to the last one

There may be some who feel like they are just another member of God’s family

You don’t see yourself as anything special or unique

You feel like you are one of the least of the family

You think there are other sheep that are more important to God than you

God has no particular reason to have any real interest in you

You are just a number to God

I remind you that each day of our life we pass under God’s rod

You’ve just as important to God as any other sheep in His flock

You are individually special to God

He cares as much about you as He does any other member of His family

You are not just another in the many

He knows you and knows you by name!

He is deeply interested in you

**He is Interested in Each of His Sheep**

Secondly, these actions of the shepherd remind us of -

**B. How Intimate He is with Each Sheep**

Each sheep is special to the shepherd

Each sheep is loved by the shepherd

He knows his sheep

He cared for his sheep

He loves his sheep

He loves one as much as the other

I want to remind you that the Lord loves YOU as much as He does any other

**Song:** There was a song that came out several years ago that says it best; *“He loves me like I was His only child.”*

What am I saying?

You are important to God!

Just as each sheep was special to the heart of the shepherd, you are special to the heart of God

How can we face those days that are ahead?

We have a Shepherd who treats each of us like we were the only sheep in His pasture

**THE LORD’S “INTIMACY”**

**THE LORD’S “ATTENTION”**

**THE LORD’S “AFFECTIONS”**