

SHIELDS OF BRASS

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“And it came to pass in the fifth year of King Rehoboam, that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem: And he took away the treasures of the House of the LORD, and the treasures of the King’s house; he even took away all: and He took away all the shields of gold which Solomon had made. And King Rehoboam made In their stead brazen shields, and committed Them unto the hands of the chief of the guard, Which kept the door of the king’s house. And It was so, when the king went into the House of the LORD, that the guard bare Them, and brought them back into the Guard chamber.”

† 1 Kings 14:25-28

The evening of April 12 as I was spending time with the Lord in prayer and meditation for ministry I began, as I often do and have for many, many years, to weep over the condition of the Church and ministry. Perhaps my greatest burden, because I'm sent to the Church, is not for the lost but rather for those who are supposed to be seeking the lost, binding up the wounds of the hurting, feeding the hungry, helping the poor and training up young men and women for ministry.

For many decades now I have been extremely burdened by the false ministry model(s) coming out of America. Even during my first ministry trip to Nigeria in 1988 when I was in Benin City for many months and I visited the church of Benson Idahosa I was even more burdened—where is the truth in ministry anywhere in the world today? Where is the gold and purity? Where is the humility and heart of Jesus? My heart has been for the young eagles who have erroneously accepted these false ministry models and messages (prosperity gospel, etc., all the many false gospels out there) coming from America and the West.

When you are raised in a family, then that family is your “model” and what you think a family should look like. So if you're raised in a church family where the ministry model is not biblical but worldly or even demonic then that is the ministry model you will follow until and unless you have an encounter with the Holy Spirit. Today our country is inundated with such churches and ministries—all copycat Christians and copycat ministers.

In our text for this teaching, King David and then Solomon had constructed these shields of pure gold for the Lord's house. Now if we can see this with the Eye of the Eagle we can discern the spiritual symbolism. What does gold symbolize? What does a shield symbolize in the Scriptures? What does brass or bronze always symbolize in the Bible? What does Egypt and the king or Pharaoh of Egypt always symbolize? Who would Rehoboam represent?

The king of Egypt (which symbolizes Satan and his world system that seeks to hold us who have been freed by the blood in bondage and recapture us once we escape) had come into the house of the Lord and taken away that which was precious. He took away all the treasures of the House of the LORD. Now what might those represent spiritually? And he also took the shields of gold. So Rehoboam had to do something to replace them so that the House of the Lord would look proper again with nothing out of place. The Word says, “Rehoboam made in their stead brazen (bronze) shields.”

From a distance, you couldn't tell the difference, they still looked like the gold shields. Let's face it; most Christians wouldn't be able to tell the difference between shields of gold or brass in their church. Gold is a symbol of Heaven. Gold is everywhere in Heaven and it's also a symbol for purity and excellence. My wife and I have been privileged many times to walk on the streets of gold in Heaven. They are so pure that they are completely transparent—they look more like gold glass that you might observe in the windows of many metropolitan skyscrapers today.

Bronze on the other hand is always a symbol of sin and impurity. That is the point behind the bronze laver and bronze altar construction for the tabernacle and later the temple by Solomon. Even the priests who were God's ministers had to go into the Presence past the bronze laver and bronze altar on their journey into the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies.

So Rehoboam, who was Solomon's son and hence a Son of the King or a child of the King was now in charge and he had replaced the gold shields with shields of bronze that had been given over to the worldly system controlled by the devil. Hence, purity, holiness and the Presence of the Lord had been replaced with impurity, sin and idolatry in the House of the Lord.

But from a distance you could not tell the difference. If you came there for worship and to be in the Presence of God the gold shields looked as though they were still the same. They still had worship; it just wasn't anointed; they still had a 30 minute preaching message; it just wasn't anointed. Why? Because they had replaced the gold shields, which symbolize the Holy Spirit and His Presence and control over the worship service, with shields of bronze that they got from the worldly system controlled by Satan in order to please the people and be more popular. Let's face it, the "ancient path" as it's sometimes referred to in the Scriptures is a narrow road Jesus said "And few there be who find it."

If you want to have a large church and be a big name preacher then you have to compromise or else nobody will want to come. They'll say the service is too long or they'll complain that too much time being spent in prayer or that the preaching message is too long. So they won't come back. And after all, that is what is important. It doesn't really matter what the Lord wants as long as the church is full. If it's empty then your wife, family and everybody in town will know that you are a failure, right?

And if you are called to be an evangelist, prophet or other ministry that travels to other churches, what Jerry Savelle refers to as "traveling ministry" you too must compromise. After all, if you really speak the truth then the church will probably become offended and the pastor, bishop or apostle won't invite you back so how can you meet your expenses?

Now true ministry has been replaced with programs and music from the world; church growth seminars and emphasis on the monetary things of life allow the churches to continue to grow but without the true shields of gold there's no realability to effect change in the lives and hearts of the people because it's only the Presence and anointing by the Spirit that can do this. But since most Christians cannot tell the

difference, because they do not recognize the anointing, they cannot make the “righteous judgment” that Jesus spoke about—they must judge by the physical and to the physical eye, everything looks great. The church is growing; they have plenty of money in the bank; a new building or are getting ready to build one (even if they don’t need one). Jesus even said that this church age we are now living in thinks that they are wealthy but what is His counsel?

I remember how shocked I was 15 years ago when I had coffee one morning in Canada with the worship leader of the Vineyard church out of the Vancouver area where all the anointed Vineyard worship music was originating. He informed me that many pastors were now choosing worship leaders who were not even saved but they had great musical talent. On the surface they would look like a shield of gold but instead are brass.

We’ve seen this same thing in Christian schools where they hire teachers who are not born again. Yes, make no mistake, in many areas of what used to be sacred—the holiness of the sanctuary of the Lord—the shields of gold have been replaced with those of brass. Yet the beat goes on. The board is pleased because the coffers are full. The district superintendent or bishop is pleased because the people are happy with the “blended” system of worship and the other adjustments that “leadership” has had to make in order to make the shields of brass look just like gold.

The name of the church had to be changed from Deliverance Tabernacle to City Bible Church because, after all, deliverance is not a popular subject and people will become offended if we try to free the captives. Besides, Christians cannot have demons anyway, I know because I was taught that in seminary. In fact, demons and the devil probably don’t even exist. One of our elders just wrote a 100 page document proving that Christians cannot have demons so why should we carry on with something that is costing us attendance and

money. Let's just eliminate casting out devils from the normal worship service. I cannot remember any time in the last twenty or more years when I've ever seen the devil cast out of a person in the normal worship service unless it was during a service when Evie or I was ministering and they began to manifest. It's not popular to cast out devils so let's just leave that out; never mind Mark 16, after all many of the new bibles say that this was not contained in the earliest manuscripts.

Nobody seems to mind that the false gospel now preached in these churches and the false ministry practiced does not free the captives, cause blind eyes to open or the lame to walk. After all, there's a price to be paid for success. But in the end, there's a price to be paid all right but it's spiritual and that's a subject that these "leaders" seem to know very little about.

Gold is the most noble metal and in its pure form or even 14 kt gold does not tarnish which is one reason that it's preferred for jewelry along with its being hypoallergenic. People often react to the impurities found in other metals and spiritually speaking this also happens in these churches. Very often, in fact almost every time now, when the Lord sends me some place to teach or minister He will take me there by the Spirit months before I ever go there physically. I'm allowed to see and "feel" what is occurring spiritually and observe the service and what is taking place spiritually. Very often I will see and know the thoughts of the people in the congregation or the ministers. Very often I will see the spirits of the people and they will be emaciated because of a poor "diet" of not being taught the Word and truth (Mt 4:4; Lk 4:4).

Brass or bronze being an alloy of copper, however, does not have the same properties as gold. Like silver, brass will tarnish. The oxygen from the world acts as a poison and tarnishes the metal so that an oxide is formed which is darker and blacker in appearance. Over time,

and it's not very long, the shields of brass no longer resemble gold; they are a blackish green color of copper oxide and must be cleaned in order to restore them to their proper illusory appearance. New programs, new ministries, new means and schemes must be developed in order to have the faithful relieved of their excess cash and the system to continue.

The system, because it is a mixture of the world and the devil, doesn't mind lying here or there—it's "justified" as a white lie if it serves the greater good of "preaching the gospel and winning the world to Jesus." But the truth is they are guilty of what Paul saw and wrote about in his day: preaching "another gospel" with a "different Jesus" and "another spirit." Often they don't even realize that they have departed from the faith because if they ever possessed the Eye of the Eagle they lost it through deception and choosing the wrong road to travel. Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, their eyes are blind to the Savior who is standing there speaking to them and pleading for them to return to their first love.

Make no mistake, just as Jesus was betrayed by Judas while walking the earth so is He being betrayed by many in the organized religion of Christianity. This betrayal is on three levels just as it was with Judas.

Like Zechariah wrote:

"What are these wounds in thine hands?" Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends."

If you're in ministry, I pray that this teaching will cause you to repent if you've been guilty of wounding the Lord "in the house" of the church by wounding His Body through shields of brass. If you do not repent, the Lord will remove your candlestick because all that is not of the Spirit and by the Spirit—all that is not a shield of gold—must come down.

For 3 ½ years at the CCI church in Libby, Montana, the Lord had Ev and I preaching various messages with the theme of “Come out of her, my people.” (Rev. 18:4) If you are in such a church or ministry then you must come out of it or you will suffer its judgment. You may even be in leadership but if the Spirit is speaking to you to “come out” then you must or you will be judged. Most Christians do not understand this.

About 7 years ago I was bow hunting in NW Montana in early September. This is the time of year when I normally do my spiritual checkup that I advise all Christians to take at least once a year—a time to go away and be alone with the Lord and allow Him to speak to you and judge you. Believe me, this will help your spiritual life if you will do it.

We have a friend in Alabama who had left the church she and her family were attending; she became convicted by circumstance like I’ve discussed and could no longer attend services there. Her husband, however, was one of the elders at the church and he continued going and functioning as an elder. Although I later met this man and prophesied over him in a service at this time I had not met him though I knew some things about him by the Spirit.

During this time I was not even thinking about our friend or her husband but during the night one night the Lord awakened me as He often does and spoke to me. He said, “If _____ (and the Lord called his name) continues on as an elder in that church he will share in the sins of that church.”

Friends, there are consequences to sin and this applies even more so to you if you’re an elder or in leadership. Perhaps you’re on staff at a church and you know there are some things that are just not right. Well, you’d better discuss them with those in charge and change them or else you’d better leave that church because otherwise you will “share” in the sins of that church and this is also the message of Revelation 18.

Let's pray for a return to holiness and returning the shields of gold to the churches so that the Spirit of the Lord can manifest His precious presence in our midst and the true gospel—a gospel of power—can once again be preached among the dead.

Maranatha

De oppresso liber