

GOLD, SILVER, AND PRECIOUS STONES

“Gold”

Introduction

A quick recap of where we left off from the last study, “The Kingdom of God”, with some embellishments. First, we are receiving a kingdom.

➤ Receiving a Kingdom

Ezra 3:10-13

10 And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the LORD, after the ordinance of David king of Israel.

11 And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the LORD; because he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.

12 But many of the priests and Levites and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy:

13 So that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people: for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off. KJV¹

As the children of Israel had been captives in Babylon for 70 years, these ancient men who had seen the first house were more than likely in their eighties. As joyous as the laying of the new foundation for the temple was, it served as a reminder of what they had lost and paled by comparison.

2 Chronicles 3:1-10

1 Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the LORD appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite.

2 And he began to build in the second day of the second month, in the fourth year of his reign.

3 Now these are the things wherein Solomon was instructed for the building of the house of God. The length by cubits after the first measure was threescore cubits, and the breadth twenty cubits.

4 And the porch that was in the front of the house, the length of it was according to the breadth of the house, twenty cubits, and the height was an hundred and twenty: and he overlaid it within with pure gold.

5 And the greater house he cieled with fir tree, which he overlaid with fine gold, and set thereon palm trees and chains.

6 And he garnished the house with precious stones for beauty: and the gold was gold of Parvaim.

¹ All references are from the King James Version of the Bible unless otherwise noted.

- 7 He overlaid also the house, the beams, the posts, and the walls thereof, and the doors thereof, with gold; and graved cherubims on the walls.
- 8 And he made the most holy house, the length whereof was according to the breadth of the house, twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty cubits: and he overlaid it with fine gold, amounting to six hundred talents.
- 9 And the weight of the nails was fifty shekels of gold. And he overlaid the upper chambers with gold.
- 10 And in the most holy house he made two cherubims of image work, and overlaid them with gold.

*The house Solomon built for the Lord was truly glorious. As 1 Kings 6:18b states, "there was no stone seen." The most prominent metal seen was gold. The porch was covered in gold. The entire interior of the holy place and holy of holies was covered with gold and garnished with precious stones for beauty. The priests walked on gold and a ceiling of gold was over their heads. No wonder they cried when the new foundation stone was laid!*²

Haggai 2:3-9

- 3 Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory? and how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing?
- 4 Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the LORD; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the LORD, and work: for I am with you, saith the LORD of hosts:
- 5 According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not.
- 6 For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land;
- 7 And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts.
- 8 The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts.
- 9 The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts.

*Though the latter house has progressive fulfillment in the structures that follow (Herod's temple because Jesus entered it and the Millennial temple because He will rule from it), its ultimate greater glory is seen in the Church of Jesus Christ, the temple of the living God. The devil's propaganda would have us to believe that the church is as nothing compared to the glory days of the Old Testament prophets or the New Testament apostles. Haggai's words speak to us today. Does the church seem weak and as nothing to you compared to those glory days? Be strong and work for the Lord is with you and His Spirit remains **in** you, fear not. The glory of this house shall be greater and His peace will continue to reside therein.*

The writer of Hebrews quotes the prophet Haggai in Hebrews 12.

² As a side note, the stones of the house were covered with silver first (1 Chr. 29:4), then encased in wood and covered in gold. The silver of the walls was hidden from view.

Hebrews 12:22-29

- 22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,
23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,
24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

We are not standing at the foot of Mount Sinai. We are seated in the heavenlies with Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:6). We are in the city of the living God, New Jerusalem. It is here that the blood of sprinkling resides. The blood of the covenant is in heaven seated right next to the Father, whose good pleasure it is to give us the kingdom.

When we talk about inheriting the kingdom or the salvation of the soul, we are not talking about a gospel of works. We are saved by grace, not of works that any man should boast. Our salvation was complete when we confessed Christ in faith. Receiving the kingdom in that day is much more about not losing what God has already given us than it is about earning what He would pay us. Does the gospel involve work? Certainly, but it is not a gospel of works (i.e., I earned my own salvation). It is a gospel of grace (i.e., because of the grace He has given me through Christ Jesus, I can manifest the outworking of my salvation). Our starting block is within the walls of New Jerusalem sprinkled with the new covenant blood of Jesus Christ that speaks better things than the blood of Abel!

An illustration may help explain this point. A man of little substance and humble means hires himself out to work. He works diligently and spends prudently. Eventually, he has enough capital to begin his own enterprise. He works as a good business man and over the course of time, his empire grows and he becomes rich. He is the proverbial “self-made man.” He has worked for his kingdom and earned it.

Another man is born into a wealthy household. His father imparts to him all the training, skills, talents, and resources necessary to manage the family business. “We really only have one shortfall,” his father tells him, “and that is man power. We have plenty of work to do but not enough people for the job. So along with managing the business, you have to concentrate on recruitment and human resources.” If the son does well – he is a good business man as well as a fair boss – the business will grow and prosper. He will not only keep his inheritance, it’s actual worth would have increased. But suppose this son was lazy or abusive? What if he lacked character to the degree that not only could he not find people to hire, he couldn’t even retain the people he had? What if he pursued get-rich-quick schemes and squandered the company’s resources? Well, family or no such a son would be in definite danger of being fired (double entendre intended).

Our position is that of the son who has been given an inheritance. Our Father is asking us to keep it. Not only keep it, but to increase its worth by adding to the number of laborers at work in His harvest field.

Hebrews 12:25

See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven:

I spoke from heaven to people on earth before, He is saying, now I am speaking to citizens of heaven from heaven. If the people on earth who disobeyed Him died, what of those who are standing in heaven now but refuse to hear Him? Do not be fooled, God is not mocked – in heaven or earth.

We need to grasp the position from which the admonition comes. We are not working to gain the fullness of heaven that shall be given. We are working because of the grace that God has extended to us in order to keep the fullness of heaven that He has promised us.

Hebrews 12:26-27

26 Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.

27 And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.

Not only the earth, but heaven itself is going to be shaken up. Presently, the angels are doing the majority of the kingdom power work at the response of an authoritative command from man. But man is destined to rule the universe under Jesus Christ. The present structure is going to shake and the redeemed shall reign under their Lord. Know ye not that we shall judge angels?

Hebrews 12:28-29

28 Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:

29 For our God is a consuming fire.

He doesn't put us through the fire to see if we will stand. He puts us through the fire so that we can stand. He is a consuming fire. It is His nature. Burning up unrighteousness is what He does simply by being. Because He wants us to be with Him, He desires that we have substance enough to remain in His consuming embrace.

Verse 28 says that we are receiving a kingdom. Unfortunately, "receiving" has primarily a passive connotation in English. The giver is active, the receiver passive. The word used here in the Greek is paralambano. The King James translators translated this word as "receive" 15 times out of its fifty uses in the New Testament. The other 35 times it was translated as "take."³ Of course, taking a kingdom gives us a much more active connotation.

A use of this word in the Greek Old Testament helps to illustrate this point.

³ Take – 32; take unto – 2; take with – 1.

Daniel 5:22-31

- 22 And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this;
- 23 But hast lifted up thyself against the LORD of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified:
- 24 Then was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written.
- 25 And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.
- 26 This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it.
- 27 TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.
- 28 PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.
- 29 Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.
- 30 In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain.
- 31 And Darius the Median took [*paralambano*] the kingdom, being about threescore and two years old.

*Paralambano means "to receive with or to oneself what is given, imparted, delivered over, equal to take from another into one's own hands such as an office, dignity, ministry (Col 4:17); a kingdom (Heb 12:28)."*⁴ *It does not just fall into our lap. We must grasp it, take it, and hold onto it.*

Matthew 11:12

And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

Kingdom building isn't a passive reception. It is a very active and aggressive undertaking.

➤ Observations of Literary Structure – 1 Cor. 3:12-15

| Refineable Materials | Combustible Materials (-) | Living Materials (+) | Spirit Realm Materials |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Gold | 1. Stubble | 1. Reed | 1. Faith |
| 2. Silver | 2. Hay | 2. Grass | 2. Love |
| 3. Precious Stones | 3. Wood | 3. Tree | 3. Hope |

The symbolic building materials laid out for us in 1 Corinthians 3:12 are done so in a one-two-three three-two-one structure (see table above). Thus, the refineable material of

⁴from The Complete Word Study Bible and The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament Copyright © 1991, 1992, 1994, 2002 AMG International, Inc.

gold is held in comparison to the combustible material of stubble. But stubble as a negative quality or building material also has a positive symbol associated to it, which is the reed. So let us look at stubble, reeds, gold and faith.

I. Stubble Won't Stand

A. It Burns Completely – Is. 47:14

Isaiah 47:7-14

- 7 And thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever: so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it.
- 8 Therefore hear now this, thou that art given to pleasures, that dwellest carelessly, that sayest in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children:
- 9 But these two things shall come to thee in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon thee in their perfection for the multitude of thy sorceries, and for the great abundance of thine enchantments.
- 10 For thou hast trusted in thy wickedness: thou hast said, None seeth me. Thy wisdom and thy knowledge, it hath perverted thee; and thou hast said in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me.
- 11 Therefore shall evil come upon thee; thou shalt not know from whence it riseth: and mischief shall fall upon thee; thou shalt not be able to put it off: and desolation shall come upon thee suddenly, which thou shalt not know.
- 12 Stand now with thine enchantments, and with the multitude of thy sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou mayest prevail.
- 13 Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy counsels. Let now the astrologers, the stargazers, the monthly prognosticators, stand up, and save thee from these things that shall come upon thee.
- 14 Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame: there shall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before it.

In this scathing condemnation of Babylon for her wickedness, arrogance, and occult practices, the Lord says that her false prophets shall burn as stubble—completely. Only ash is left, no coal to be warmed with (or even a bit of charcoal to use for that matter!) and nothing left to burn.

A stubble work shows itself to be completely devoid of value once it encounters fire.

B. It Is Enmity with God – Ex. 15:7

The word translated “stubble” in 1 Corinthians 3:12 is kalame and appears only there. But in the Septuagint, it is used in Exodus 15:7.

Exodus 15:6-7

- 6 Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O LORD, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.

7 And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee: thou sentest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble.

This is a portion of the song Moses sung in praise for the Lord's victory over the Egyptians. He said that the Lord's enemies were consumed as stubble by His wrath.

Nahum 1:2, 10

2 God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and is furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and **he reserveth wrath for his enemies.**

10 For while they be folden together as thorns, and while they are drunken as drunkards, **they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry.**

In that the enemies of God are destroyed as stubble, a stubble work then would be one that is at enmity with Him. Works done in the name of Christ that are actually antagonistic to His ways and purposes (e.g., ordaining overt Sodomites⁵ to the Christian ministry as a social statement of inclusion) are stubble works. They won't stand the fire.

James 4:4-10

4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

5 Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?

6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.

10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

Friendship with the world is enmity with God. We cannot pursue friendship with the world system and not attack God in the same step. Once we embrace the world, we are fighting against God. The Old Testament gives us a great example of this.

Jacob and Leah had a daughter named Dinah (Gen. 30:21). She was a member of the covenant community but wanted to "see the daughters of the land."⁶ The women of the world captured her curiosity and she walked out from under the covering of her family. Consequently, she was assaulted and became defiled (Gen. 34:2-5). I am not blaming the victim for her rape. But she did place herself in a compromising position by leaving her family and seeking out the women of the world. The church does no less when she befriends the world. The enemy is ultimately responsible for taking swipes at us, but we don't need to place ourselves in a vulnerable position in which we can easily be hit.

⁵ Ordaining covert Sodomites isn't a good idea either!

⁶ Gen 34:1. Commentators suppose it was to go to a feast in Shechem.

Dinah's destiny became derailed through her flirtation with the world. Defilement, deceit, and death were the end results of her fateful steps toward the daughters of the land. Jacob's daughter becomes a footnote in Israel's history.

Conversely, foreign women and those of dubious character that showed forth fruits meet for repentance find their place in the genealogy of Jesus Christ.⁷ We cannot afford to be friends of the world. We must repent and humble ourselves before God that He might lift us up.

C. It Represents Pride and Arrogance – Mal. 4:1

Malachi 4:1

For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

All proud and wicked works are stubble. They will burn. When we build our kingdom in our strength and plaster it with a Christian veneer all the while keeping the glory for ourselves, we are involved in a stubble work. It will not stand in the day of judgment.

1 John 2:15-17

15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

The lust of the flesh leads to hay works. The lust of the eyes leads to wood works. And the pride of life leads us into building with stubble. Only doing the will of God produces an abiding work. And we cannot do that if we are in love with the world.

Galatians 3:5-14

5 He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

6 Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.

8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.

9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

12 And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.

⁷ Tamar, Rahab, Ruth – Matt 1:3, 5 (Ruth's character is always shown as sterling. But she was a foreigner!)

13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

A true salvation of works—being justified by the law—leads to pride and arrogance. It is self-salvation and if we could pull it off we would then have room to boast. But we cannot pull it off. All we can do is put our faith in the One who did, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is through faith we are justified for the just shall live by faith.

II. A Bruised Reed Is not Broken

Though the word kalame (stubble) appears only in 1 Corinthians 3:12, its masculine form kalamos (reed) does show up in interesting and various places.

A. He Is Tender Toward Our Frame – Matt. 12:18-21

Matthew 12:18-21

18 Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.

19 He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.

20 A bruised reed [*kalamos*] shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.

21 And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.

Jesus isn't about kicking us when we are down. He doesn't break us when we are beaten nor quench us when we are smoldering. No, He sets at liberty those that our bruised and pours oil into our lamps. He is tender toward our frame and knows that we are but dust.

B. His Humiliation Brought Glory – Matt. 27:29-31

Matthew 27:29-31

29 And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed [*kalamos*] in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!

30 And they spit upon him, and took the reed [*kalamos*], and smote him on the head.

31 And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him.

Can you imagine what it will be like for those soldiers who didn't repent at the resurrection of the unjust when they must bow the knee before the Lord of lords and King of kings? They mocked His claim to kingship with a fake scepter and a crown of thorns. But by His death He exchanged them for a crown of gold and a scepter of iron.

Revelation 14:14

And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle.

Revelation 19:11-16

- 11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.
- 12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.
- 13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.
- 14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.
- 15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.
- 16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

The crown of thorns, representative of the curse, has been broken and replaced with a crown of gold. The reed that was used to mock Him was replaced by the ruling rod of iron. These same things are promised to us if we overcome.

Revelation 2:26-27

- 26 And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:
- 27 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.

All nations will be subject to His rule. If we overcome, we get to rule with Him. Gold not only represents faith, but rulership and authority also.

Revelation 4:1-4, 10-11

- 1 After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.
- 2 And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.
- 3 And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.
- 4 And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.
- 10 The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,
- 11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

These four and twenty elders had golden crowns which they cast at the feet of the Lord in worship. There is no pride in heaven. Only humble adoration.

1 Peter 5:1-7

- 1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:
- 2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;
- 3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.
- 4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.
- 5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.
- 6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:
- 7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

Keeping our worries to ourselves is prideful. It is telling God that we know more than Him and can work out our own situations. Crowns are given for submission, to Christ first and then to one another. If we don't learn to cast our cares at His feet in this life, we shall not have crowns of gold to cast at His feet in that life.

C. He Tasted Bitterness to Give Us the Water of Life – Matt. 27:45-50

Matthew 27:45-50

- 45 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.
- 46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?
- 47 Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man calleth for Elias.
- 48 And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed [*kalamos*], and gave him to drink.
- 49 The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him.
- 50 Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.

Near the end of His passion, Jesus tasted bitter vinegar from a sponge on the end of a reed. He tasted it, gave up the ghost, and poured out the promise of redemption and the water of life.

John 19:30-34

- 30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.
- 31 The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.
- 32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.
- 33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs:

34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

He tasted the bitterness of death that we might receive the sweet water of life and offer it to a dying world.

Revelation 22:17

And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

III. Faith is Gold in God's Eyes

Faith is the coin of heaven, the fabric of the universe. Real faith, that which has withstood the trial and received the promise, is precious in God's eyes.

A. It Is more Precious than Gold – 1 Pet. 1:3-9

1 Peter 1:3-9

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

9 Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

The ultimate fiery trial will be the judgment seat of Christ. The proven faith that we have remaining and the works that were done thereby shall be rewarded by Him. Our faith will receive His praise, honor, and glory. Notice verse 9. As the salvation of our spirits is the beginning of our faith (Eph. 2:8), the end of our faith is the salvation of our souls. Each is appropriated through faith.

Malachi 3:2-3

2 But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:

3 And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness.

He purges us that we may praise Him. He wants righteous offerings, gifts of praise given in real faith not the chump change of religious compliance. He refines our faith that we might have real gold—real wealth—not just imagined abundance.

Revelation 3:17-19

17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

We need to buy from Him gold tried in the fire. The only way we can do this is to allow Him to lead us into situations that only He can get us through or out of. If we are not cautious, material wealth will lull us to sleep and self-deception. We begin to trust our bank book for our daily bread instead of asking God for it. We need to be in the place where our faith isn't just lip service (e.g. "I believe in God.") but an actual life-engaging trust in His goodness and justice.

B. Our Righteousness Is by Faith – Rom. 1:16-17

Romans 1:16-17

16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

Romans 3:21-28

21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.

28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

There is no place for pride in the kingdom of God. There is no boasting. Why? Because our salvation comes from our faith in what He has done not in what we can (or cannot) do. Boasting is excluded by the law of faith. If God performs a miracle through me, I cannot boast of it as if I had done some marvelous thing. No, I simply put faith in what

He said and He did the work. Faith causes all the glory (also symbolized by gold) to go to God.

C. Necessary Ingredient to Pleasing God – Heb. 11:6

Faith is the fabric of the universe. God said and it was.

Hebrews 11:3

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

Romans 4:16-17

16 Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,

17 (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

God calls the things which are not (present tense) as though they were (past tense). This is faith. It is how He operates and how He has mandated that we must relate to Him. We cannot please Him without faith.

Hebrews 11:6

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

If I am working for the kingdom without faith, then I don't believe God rewards those who diligently seek Him. And if I am not seeking His eternal rewards, then for what am I working but my immediate gain? That would be building on the foundation of Jesus Christ with the prideful stubble of my own wicked arrogance. But laboring in faith is building with gold and is duly rewarded.

Conclusion

We cannot walk in worldliness, pride, or arrogance. We must recognize His work of grace through faith and receive His reward.

James 1:12

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

Revelation 2:10-11

10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.