

Gold or brass (1 Ki. 10)

Part 1

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[00:00:01] Now, the first book of Kings.

The first book of Kings, chapter 10.

First Kings, chapter 10, verse 16, 17.

King Solomon made 200 targets of beaten gold. 600 shekels of gold went to one target.

And he made 300 shields of beaten gold.

Three pounds of gold went to one shield. And the king put them in the house of the host in Lebanon.

[00:01:04] Chapter 14, verses 25-27.

And it came to pass in the fifth year of King Rehoboam, that Shechak, 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 gold.

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 into the hands of the chief of the guard, which kept the door of the king's house.

[00:02:07] Now, I want to read seven scriptures. Now, before you grab your coats and go away, they're only very short. But I must read them because each and every one are little steps in connecting with what I have to say. Now, we turn to the book of Ezra. Ezra. Ezra, chapter 1, and verses 5 and 6.

Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah, Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, and all them whose spirit God had raised up to build the house of the Lord, [00:03:05] which is in Jerusalem.

And all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, beside all thee that was willingly offered.

Now, chapter 3.

Chapter 3, and verses 1 to 3.

And when the seventh month was come, and the children of Israel were in the cities, the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem. Then stood up Yeshua, the son of Josedek, and his brethren, the priests, and the rebel, the son of Shealtiel, and his brethren, [00:04:03] and built the altar of God, the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon, as it is written in the law of Moses, the man of God.

And they set the altar upon his faces, for fear was upon them because of the people of those countries, and they offered burnt offerings thereon unto the Lord, even burnt offerings morning and evening. Now, a little bit lower down that chapter, 9 to 13. 9 to 13.

Then stood Yeshua with his sons and his brethren, Gadmeel and his sons, and the sons of Judah together, to set forward the work of the house of God, the sons of Lenedak with their sons and their brethren, the Levites. [00:05:01] 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. And they sang together by chorus in praising and giving thanks unto the Lord, because he is good, for his mercy endureth forever toward Israel. All the people shouted with a great shout when they praised the Lord, because the foundations of the house of the Lord were laid. But many of the priests and Levites and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundations of this house were laid, before their eyes, wept with a loud voice. And many shouted aloud for joy, so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy [00:06:02] from the noise of the weeping of the people, for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard aloud.

Now chapter four.

When the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the Lord God of Israel, then they came to the Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you. For we seek your God as ye do, and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esau, king of Asshur, which brought us up nither. Zerubbabel, and Jeshua the priest, [00:07:02] and the rest of the chief of the fathers of Israel, said unto these, Ye have nothing to do with us to build a house unto our God, but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel, as King Cyrus, the king of Persia, hath commanded us.

Now chapter eight.

Chapter eight and verse twenty-one. Twenty-one to twenty-three.

Then I proclaimed at last there at the river Anahot, that we might afflict our souls, afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance. [00:08:03] For I was ashamed that to require the king, a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way, because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him, but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him. So we asked him, and we sought our God for this, and he was entreated of us.

Now chapter ten.

One to three.

Now when Ezra had prayed, and when he had confessed, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God, there assembled unto him out of Israel a very great congregation of men and women and children, all the people wept very sore. And Jechemiah, the son of Jechiel, son of Elam, [00:09:04] answered and said unto Ezra, We have trespassed against our God, and have taken strange wives of the people of the land. Yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing. Now therefore let us make a covenant with our God to put away all the wives, and such as both of them, according to the counsel of my Lord, and of those that tremble at the commandment of our God, and let it be done according to the law.

Now finally, in Nehemiah chapter two.

Ezra, Nehemiah chapter two.

And 17 to 20.

Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we are in, [00:10:02] how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire. Come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach.

Then I told them of the hand of my God which was upon them, and from them was also the King's word that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build.

So they strengthened their hands for the good work.

And when Sanballat, the Koranite, Baal, the Serpent, the Ammonite, and Geshem, the Caribbean, heard of it, they laughed at the storm, and despised us, and said, What is this thing that ye do? Will ye rebel against the King? Then answered I them, and said unto them, The God of heaven, he will prosper us, [00:11:02] therefore we his servants will arise and build, that ye have no portion, no right, no memorial in Jerusalem.

Rightly or wrongly, I always feel that coming to Newcastle is like going Christmas shopping, buying something for somebody that's got everything. Because rightly or wrongly, I always view this area as a place where it has been greatly blessed in the past. Many capable sons of the Lord have been raised up.

Many spiritual men, strong in the faith, and mighty in the word, have lived in this area. [00:12:04] Coupled with that, you year by year, week by week, all through the winter, you come together for ministry meetings like this, and you pull, as it were, the cream that is still amongst us under the Lord's good and gracious hand, and you have ministry week by week, and year by year. So what can you say to people like that, so well instructed, for indeed something must rub off of all this ministry, and this truth that has been ministered all down these years. Well, in the light of that, I feel that I can't add anything to what you've already got, but I want to say tonight, I want to raise a challenge.

Now, that is my object tonight, I want to raise a challenge to you, to me, a challenge, in the light of the scriptures that we have read. [00:13:03] Now, to put you in the picture, and as it were, to set the stage, I just want to say this, that the first two scriptures that we read in Kings, I don't really want to speak

about them. I only want to use them as a sounding board, to, as it were, throw truth at it, sound, as it were, to get a rebound, and to see what the echo is, to use them as a sounding board. That's all I want in Kings, to use those two scriptures as a sounding board for my remarks tonight. Now, in the first scripture in Kings, we need to say a few words of introduction, but as I say, I don't wish to speak about them at length, but we're not breaking into the history of the children of God, the children of Israel, in Egypt, in slavery, we aren't breaking into their history in the wilderness, we aren't breaking into their history fighting to get into the land, [00:14:02] we aren't breaking into their history in the troubled times of the kings, when there was man's king, as it were, on the throne, and God's anointed rejected, we aren't in that area at all. David has won his battles, David has come to the throne, and he's gathered great booty and great wealth for the building of the house of the Lord, and we're even beyond that stage, we're in Solomon's reign, the brightest, the grandest day, I would say, in the history of the children of Israel, their brightest moment, for it says, in relation to the circumstances, the time that we're talking about, when the temple had been raised up, Solomon on the throne, there was no enemy, nor evil occurred.

What a wonderful moment this is in their history. We often take them up, and we think about their failures, and their shortcomings, but we're not breaking in at this juncture on such an area. [00:15:04] We're talking of the brightest and the best moment, when indeed King Solomon was there on the throne, their enemies had been subdued, then David had gathered booty, and if you try and work out what David supplied for the building of the house of the Lord, in old money, not inflation money, you'll be astounded. It's astronomical what he gathered as a result of the battles, the booty and the treasure, for the building of the house of the Lord. But we've got past that, the temple has been built, and what a day that was.

There was gold in abundance.

Silver was thought nothing of. Gold in abundance.

Gold in abundance.

And it's said here in the first scripture that he made these targets of gold, and these shields of gold, [00:16:01] and he put them in the king's house. Now I've no doubt that these would indeed come to light, you know, when they had a great civil occasion. Like, you know, when we put on a great show, and they do put on a great show in this country, you know, on the Trooping of the Colours, coronation days and jubilee days, then all the regalia is brought out of the king's house, and there it's seen.

The Americans come thousands of miles to have a look at it, don't they? Gasp and wonder. What a wonderful show. No doubt these targets of gold and these shields were brought out on such an occasion. Real gold.

The second scripture, you know, tells us a little bit later on, and the enemy had come, and as they say today, he'd nicked them, he'd taken them, he'd robbed them, he'd robbed them. [00:17:03] So what did this king do?

Why, he replaced them. He replaced them. And he replaced them in brass.

Gold. Brass.

You can polish brass up, you know. Oh, yes, it looks good. Almost looks like gold, doesn't it? But old exchange gold.

Old exchange gold for brass.

Now, that's the sounding board. Gold. Brass.

Brass looks like gold, but in relation to gold, almost worthless.

Now, we'll leave that for the moment. Now, I just want to remind you, as I say, I've nothing new to tell you tonight. Nothing at all. Nothing that you don't know.

[00:18:01] In the book of the Revelation, we get indeed seven letters to the churches. There we are in the wisdom of God, the responsible pathway of the church, of the church's history, here in this world.

And it sets off with Ephesus, you know. The brightest day, might we say, just after the apostles had gone. There we have indeed Ephesus. Hardly anything wrong. Hardly, I say.

You know the circumstances. They met the first love. Not as it were it started then, but that was the brightest day. We come down through Smyrna, through the trials, and where there was opposition to the testimony, and for those that were sealing their testimony with their blood, they offered to them a crown of life.

We come down then indeed to Quagamos, and we see indeed the church, as it were, settling in the well. [00:19:03] We come to Tyre, Tyre, and you know what we speak about that.

That would reflect the features and characteristics of Catholicism. We come indeed to Sardis, and there we have the features reflected of Protestantism. And then we come to Philadelphia, and finally to Laodicea. A thing that's ready to be spewed out of his mouth.

It's an awful word, isn't it? You feel awful when you say it. It's spewed out of his mouth. A thing that's spurious. A thing that's to be rejected. A thing that's to be rejected. Just before that, you know, there's Philadelphia. Philadelphia, yes, and we just have a little brightness, as it were, there. A remnant who had indeed kept his word, and not denied his name.

Now I want to take tonight, [00:20:02] I want to say tonight, that we are in, not the vanguard, we are in the rearguard of a movement that started about 200 years ago when there was exercise by the spirit of God, and men saw indeed that in the profession of Christendom, there was indeed disregard for the authority of the word, and they found that according to their conscience, as the word was operative in their souls, they couldn't walk, they couldn't exercise their privilege, they couldn't exercise and give expression to the truth that was embodied there, and they moved out.

They moved out.

And they moved out indeed, I believe, the faith of their souls, the work of Christ, the person of Christ, and all that flowed from that. [00:21:01] And as they moved out from that current system, that by men introducing things that are wrong, and following wrong practices, and things like that, as they were separate from that, God blessed them, He enlarged before the vision of their souls, and recovered for

us wondrous truths that for ages had been, oh yes, they were in the scriptures, they were available, but the masses were in the dark about them. And I believe indeed that that movement was indeed real gold.

They gave up lands, they gave up titles, they gave up positions, and all kinds of things for real gold.

Christ was everything to them, His work, and His person, and His people.

And God indeed blessed them.

Now then, this is the challenge. We aren't in the vanguard, [00:22:03] we're in the rearguard.

Ostensibly, we are on the ground that they came out to. Ostensibly, our meetings are going on as was recovered in the early days.

How real is it?

How real is it?

Is it gold?

Is it brass?

How real is it with you? How real is it with me? Is it gold?

Is it the real McCoy? Is it gold?

Or is it the sharp?

Is it anything? Is it brass? Are we polishing it up? Polishing it up to make it go back?

Well, at the background, a few remarks that I have.

And I want now to use [00:23:02] the seven little scriptures that we've taken from Ezra and from Nehemiah.

Now, seven is a wonderful number in scripture.

As you know, there are seven.

Seven little scriptures that I have taken from Ezra and from Nehemiah.

Now, all these seven, whether we're talking about the seven men in Genesis, or the face, or the parables, or the letters, all these sevens, they're either divided into four and three, or three and four.

The face, this seven, is divided into three, four.

Three positive.

Four, you might say, negative. Now, I just want to go over these things, these seven little steps tonight. You know them.

You know them. And I want to say, indeed, how real they are.

[00:24:02] In you.

In me.

That's the challenge I want to raise here tonight. Now, we find, indeed, in Ezra, in Ezra, we get the record of the last revival, the last revival, and let me say this, in any revival, God is the first agent. If God wasn't the agent, there'd be no recovery. This is the last revival, the last recovery, in the old economy.

I believe with all my heart that we are in the rearguard of the last recovery that will be made in this dispensation. We are in the rearguard of the last recovery that will be made in this dispensation. I think the scriptures clearly point out such a situation.

Now, these men, these people, they came, indeed, [00:25:02] out of Babylon.

That's where the early brethren came out of, isn't it? Babel.

Babel.

Many voices.

Many voices.

This was a literal Babylon.

This was literal and physical, like all the things in the Old Testament. We take them up morally and spiritually.

And the first thing, indeed, I'll give you the positive things. They set up the altar.

They set up the house. They set up the walls.

Now, those were three positive, fundamental things.

These were, in this context in which we're speaking tonight, these were gold.

Gold. The real thing.

But on the other side, they had to be separate from Babylon, [00:26:01] separate from idolatry, separate from the arm of flesh, and separate from evil associations.

Yes, I know these things are generally alike, but this is the word that's laid on my heart. It is touching me.

I trust it touches each and every one of us here tonight.

So there's three positive, four negatives.

Now, the altar.

The altar. They came out of Babylon and they built it on the original foundations of the altar.

And so the early brethren, they came out and they built it on the original foundations of the altar. The cross.

The cross.

The altar, you know, speaks of the claims of God.

Speaks of acceptance. There indeed, [00:27:01] God's claims were met. Speaks of acceptance. It speaks of access. Oh yes, it speaks of all these things.

Access to God.

God is to be approached indeed through sacrifice. Through a sacrifice that is acceptable to Him. Through a sacrifice that meets His holy claims.

All these things are involved in the altar.

The second thing that they built indeed was the house.

They built indeed on the foundations of the house.

And they set things in order. They had the right order. The priests and the Levites and they had the clothes and they had them there with the trumpets and they were ready to praise according as it was written in the scriptures.

And when the foundation was laid, the present generation, the young generation, powerful joy!

[00:28:01] It was great. It was great in their eyes.

Some of the ancient men, you know, when they saw this house and they remembered the one that had been destroyed, they wept.

There was joy.

There was weeping.

And they couldn't tell if it was joy or sorrow, but they had a long way off.

They had a long way off.

What did the Reverend get when they got out?

The two of us to the church. His people.

His body.

His bride.

All these kindred truths, these were wonderfully recovered. Wonderfully recovered. Truth as to the gospel, the gospel of the grace of God, the gospel of the glory of God, all these wonderful things.

[00:29:01] The truth as to the rapture, dispensation of truth found its place.

Wonderful things were indeed opened up to their vision.

And so indeed here in the Old Testament, they had the house where God was known, where God indeed could be seen as to that day, and where God was manifested as it were, manifested through this wonderful building. Then we find indeed, you know, that Nehemiah comes on from there to there, and he builded the walls.

They enclosed it in. They opened up the house, they enclosed it in, and they rebuilt the walls.

When they rebuilt the walls, they opened the doors.

And there were locks, and there were bars. The locks, the bolts, and the bars. [00:30:02] We do the same thing at home, you know, don't we? When we go home, when we go home tonight, we should shut the door.

Shutting the door keeps in what's in.

It keeps out the evil that's outside. We do it for the same reason, don't we? You lock your door tonight, you're vaulted, because you want to keep out that which doesn't belong there. So there indeed, kept in what was precious.

Electricity's a wonderful thing, you know. Electricity's a wonderful thing. It has to be insulated.

When it's insulated, you can run factories, you can run these lights, you can run these fires, you can run anything. Workshops, factories, houses, everything.

But let it be short, let it run to earth. We've lost it. It's finished. And so, you see, things have got to be insulated, and while it might be isolated, [00:31:02] the parts that are isolated, they're insulated, and there's power.

Power.

Those were the features in the old economy.

Now, an instructed company like this, with all the teaching that you had over the years, you must be

able to fill in the gaps that I'm leaving. And you must be able to fill in the antitypes of these things in the new testament, in the light of the new testament. Now, there were four things, four things that they had to be separated from.

Separate from Babylon, from idolatry, from the arm of flesh, and from pagan associations.

Babylon was a real place, was a real place in that day.

It's a moral thought today, a moral thought.

[00:32:03] Oh, wasn't it a grand day when God in his infinite mercy and with the light of his spirit in my soul was able, as it were, to extract me out of and bring me to that which was of himself.

I never joined the brethren.

I'm happy to say I was converted in Leeds with a company of people that I didn't know who they were. The truth was presented, the truth as to the gospel, the truth as to God's claims. I was convicted of the guilt of my sins. I accepted in the faith of my soul Christ as my Saviour.

From that I started going to the meetings. I went to the prayer meeting, to the Bible reading, [00:33:01] I went to the fellowship meetings, and any of the meetings that they had, I was there.

I saw indeed here, exhibited before my very eyes, I saw women who were subject to scripture, who were prepared to accept the word and let go.

I saw a company where scripture said that the man should indeed take the lead in the assembly, and the man took that part.

And I saw indeed amongst them, if the scripture said it, they endeavored to do it. The scripture was the authority of which they best things.

And I found my, I found this is the place where I ought to be. And I took my place in fellowship. And I was in fellowship before ever I heard the word of open brethren, [00:34:01] or any other sort of brethren. I can honestly say that faith of my soul, I stepped out from where I was, in system, I stepped out in love to Christ, and Him alone.

Him alone.

I was working with a young man at that time, and these exercises were going on with me, and I was talking about the meetings that I had come to.

And before I'd come into fellowship with them, he said, you think these folks are saints, don't you?

I said, yes I do.

They were saints according to God. They were saints by calling. And I found my place, and I ought to be.

Now look at that.

[00:35:01] Oh, what a devil there is around us. Who's right?

No wonder people say, who's right?

Give them time to, who's right?

Hey, look at that.

When they got there, and they started, and they built the altar, and they laid the foundations of the house, those people said, we'll be with you.

We'll be with you.

Then we get that awful word, don't we?

We don't like it, do we? There's no part in it. Will you just look at 2 Kings, 2 Kings 17. [00:36:05] 2 Kings 17 and 24.

And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Qhupar, from Avar, from Hema, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria, instead of the children of Israel. And they prospered, and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof. Verse 29.

Howbeit, every nation made gods of their own, put them in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt. And the men of Babylon made Sukkoth, Menoth, and the men of Koth made Nergal, and the men of Hema made Ashima.

And the Ivites made Nibhar and Tarka, [00:37:02] and the Sepharvaims burnt their children in the fire to Ar-Adram-Elek and Anab-Delek, the gods of the Sepharvaim.

That was the ground on which they were rejected.

You see, they were keeping a clean place for all.

A clean place for all. No idolatry.

These were definitely linked with idolatry. Here's the divine record. This is where they came from. This is how they came to be there. And the very next verse says, of course, show them in their true character as soon as there was ever any refusal, then they started trouble.

Then they started trouble and started sending letters. So there we have indeed separation from idolatry.

[00:38:02] I ought to have just mentioned while we were speaking about Babylon, the New Testament scripture would be that Christ is indeed the eye, yes, and he's delivered us from this present evil world. This Babylon.

He's delivered us from this present evil world. Just like the children of Israel were delivered from an actual Babylon, so we are delivered from this present evil world. Then here the second thing that they were separate from was the idolatrous nations that were crowding about them. Then when we come to Ezra there, we find indeed that he'd been boasting and saying to the king that God is on our side. God is on the side of those that seek his face, but his wrath and his judgment is against them that do not obey him.

And so he said, I was ashamed to ask [00:39:01] an escort of the king for safe journey.

So they despised the arm of flesh.

How often we turn to the arm of flesh, don't we? The arm of flesh.

And we had a fast.

And we fasted before God and God was entreated.

And he brought them through and he brought them into the place. They despised the arm of flesh.

Then in Nehemiah's day, of course, we find indeed there that it was wrong associations. According to the Old Testament, they were wrong associations.

So, so powerfully was the word of God brought to bear upon their consciences that they were prepared to take the necessary steps to right that wrong.

[00:40:04] We are in a self-sent danger these days. I'm speaking to myself, you know. We are in a self-sent danger today wrong associations that bring indeed despise on the people and on the testimony and the law.

But really, you know, I've really covered what I had in mind.

So without letting it out any more, just to recap, gold, that's what Solomon made.

Rear bone, brass.

It looked like gold. It looked like gold. We are not in the front yard.

We are in the rear yard.

Very easy to say. Got it out. They were gold. Are we?

Is it the truth? Is it gold?

[00:41:02] Is it brass?

Out there? House?

Walls?

All these things that were in the Old Testament, real things, things of value, things of virtue, things that really mattered in the Old Testament, are indeed in the mercy of our God in a similar, in a moral, in a spiritual way, these wonderful truths are being recovered from us. And we're in the history of the churches, the dark ages, when the people were in ignorance and the word of God wasn't available for them and only those that were learned could read and people were kept in darkness. In the infinite mercy of our God, you know, in spite of all the failure, He brought in indeed a wonderful recovery. We are in the hand gathering and I don't think there'll be another. I don't think there'll be another recovery. [00:42:01] This is the final recovery in this dispensation before the Lord comes. We are in the hand gathering. Let us challenge ourselves. Let me challenge myself. Is it gold?

Or is it brass?

Three, five, four.

Though troubles assail and dangers affright though friends should all fail and foes all unite yet one thing secures us whatever betide the scripture assures us the Lord will provide. Do we believe it?

Is it gold?

Or is it brass?

Though troubles