

Message Three

**The Intrinsic Significance  
of the Materials of the Temple  
(2)**

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 3:12-17; 2 Cor. 5:9-11; Mark 14:7-8;  
Gal. 2:20; 1 Pet. 2:4-7; Rev. 3:8, 12

- I. With the exception of the Ark (1 Kings 6:19), the size and number of the furnishings and the utensils were greatly enlarged in the temple from that of the tabernacle (2 Chron. 4:1-8); this indicates that although Christ Himself (signified by the Ark) cannot be enlarged, our experience of Christ in all His riches, as signified by the temple and its furnishings and utensils, should be greatly increased and enlarged to match His enlarged expression—Eph. 3:8, 14-19; Phil. 3:7-14; cf. 1 Chron. 22:14-19; 29:2-4.**
- II. In the vision given to him by God, David saw not only the sizes of the vessels but also their weight; the size and weight signify that in the church the different aspects of the experience of Christ and the different gifts and functions of the members must be properly proportioned and balanced—28:14:**
  - A. There is a very good utterance in 1 Chronicles 28:15, which says, “By weight for each...according to the service of each kind”; in other words, the weight of each item in the temple was fitting for its service—cf. 1 Kings 6:20; Eph. 3:18.
  - B. The needs of the church are multifaceted, and the Body of Christ has many members with many functions to meet those many needs; every vessel, great or small, has an indispensable function—4:16; 1 Cor. 12:14-31; 2 Cor. 10:13.
- III. We need to take heed that we build the church as the temple of God with the proper materials; at the judgment seat of Christ, each one’s work will be proved according to “what sort it is”; we will be judged at the judgment seat of Christ not according to the quantity but according to the quality of our work—1 Cor. 3:12-17; S. S. 1:10-11; 2 Cor. 5:9-11; Rev. 3:8; Mark 14:7-8.**
- IV. The major parts of the temple were made of wood overlaid with gold, signifying man being overlaid—united, mingled, and incorporated—with God—2 Chron. 3:7; 1 Kings 6:20-21, 30, 32, 35; 7:48-51:**
  - A. The Lord’s recovery consists of God overlaying His recovered people with Himself.
  - B. Oneness is a matter of sinking deeply into the Triune God until we are fully overlaid with gold; the only way to be kept in the real oneness is to have an adequate amount of the experienced God—Eph. 4:3; Col. 2:19.
- V. The altar, the molten sea, and the lavers of the temple were made of bronze:**
  - A. Bronze signifies God’s judgment—Exo. 27:1-8; Num. 21:8-9; John 3:14.

- B. The bronze molten sea was for the priests to wash in and had twelve oxen upholding it (1 Kings 7:23-26; 2 Chron. 4:15; Exo. 38:8; Eph. 5:26); the ten bronze lavers were not for the priests to wash in but for the washing of the sacrifices (2 Chron. 4:6).
- C. The bronze sea with ten bronze lavers (vv. 2-6; 1 Kings 7:23-40) signifies the convicting, judging, and renewing Spirit of God, who, based on the death of Christ, washes away all the negative things from those participating in the dwelling of God on earth (John 16:8; Titus 3:5; Heb. 10:22).

**VI. The pillars of the temple were built of bronze, signifying God's judgment—1 Kings 7:14-15; Rev. 3:12; 21:22:**

- A. In the Scriptures the pillar is a sign, a testimony, of God's building through transformation in practicing the Body life—Gen. 28:22a; 1 Kings 7:15-22; Gal. 2:9; 1 Tim. 3:15; Rev. 3:12; Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:11-12.
- B. According to Genesis 28:18, Jacob took the stone that he had made his pillow, and he set it up as a pillar:
  1. The stone becoming a pillow signifies that the divine element of Christ constituted into our being through our subjective experience of Him becomes a pillow for our rest—Matt. 11:28-30.
  2. The pillow becoming a pillar signifies that the Christ whom we have experienced and on whom we rest becomes the material and the support for God's building, God's house—1 Kings 7:21; 1 Tim. 3:15.
- C. Those who are useful to God are constantly under God's judgment (bronze), realizing that they are men in the flesh, worthy of nothing but death and burial—Psa. 51:5; Exo. 4:1-9; Rom. 7:18; Matt. 3:16-17:
  1. We must judge ourselves as nothing and as being qualified only to be crucified; whatever we are, we are by the grace of God, and it is not we who labor but the grace of God—1 Cor. 15:10; Gal. 2:20; 1 Pet. 5:5-7.
  2. The reason for both division and fruitlessness among believers is that there is no bronze, nothing of God's judgment; instead, there is pride, self-boasting, self-vindication, self-justification, self-approval, self-excuse and self-righteousness and condemning and regulating others instead of shepherding and seeking them—Matt. 16:24; Luke 9:54-55.
  3. When we love the Lord and experience Him as the man of bronze (Ezek. 40:3), He will become our extraordinary love, boundless forbearance, unparalleled faithfulness, absolute humility, utmost purity, supreme holiness and righteousness, and our brightness and uprightness—Phil. 4:5-8.
- D. On the capitals of the pillars in the temple there were "nets of checker work [like a trellis] with wreaths of chain work"; these signify the complicated and intermixed situation in which those who are pillars in God's building live and bear responsibility—1 Kings 7:17; 2 Cor. 1:12; 4:7-8.
- E. On the top of the capitals were lilies and pomegranates—1 Kings 7:18-20:
  1. Lilies signify a life of faith in God, a life of living by what God is to us, not by what we are; the bronze means "not I," and the lily means "but Christ"—S. S. 2:1-2; Matt. 6:28, 30; 2 Cor. 5:4; Gal. 2:20.

2. The pomegranates on the wreaths of the capitals signify the fullness, the abundance and beauty, and the expression of the riches of Christ as life—Phil. 1:19-21a; Eph. 1:22-23; 3:19.
3. Through the crossing out of the network and the restriction of the chain work, we can live a pure, simple life of trusting in God to express the riches of the divine life of Christ for God’s building in life.

**VII. The stones of the temple signify Christ’s humanity in transformation, the transformed Christ—1 Kings 5:15-18; 6:7, 36; 1 Chron. 29:2; 2 Chron. 3:6:**

- A. As God, Christ in His incarnation put on man’s flesh; having become a man in the flesh, a man in the old creation, He needed to be transformed in His human part—Rom. 1:3-4.
- B. Such a transformed Christ is now the living stone, the foundation stone, the cornerstone, and the topstone of God’s building—1 Pet. 2:4; Isa. 28:16; 1 Cor. 3:11; Eph. 2:20; 1 Pet. 2:6; Zech. 4:7; 3:9; Rev. 5:6; 4:3; 21:11.
- C. The stones in the temple also signify the believers in Christ, who have been transformed by Christ as the stone—Matt. 16:18; John 1:42; 1 Pet. 2:4-7; Rev. 21:11, 14, 18-21; cf. Dan. 2:34-35, 44-45.
- D. The New Testament speaks of living stones (1 Pet. 2:5), and the Old Testament speaks of cut stones (1 Kings 5:15, 17-18; 6:7); the stones used for the building up of the church must be living inwardly and cut (dealt with) outwardly (2 Cor. 4:16):
  1. In the church some brothers and sisters can be compared to “wild” stones, freshly cut from the quarry and full of sharp edges; when they are contacted, they cause people to be hurt and to have an uncomfortable feeling.
  2. They are not stable enough to be built upon, to coordinate and serve with others, to fight the battle with others, or to bear the Ark with others.
  3. Every piece of stone used for the building of the temple was, in principle, already cut and dealt with in the mountains; thus, the sound of hammer, ax, and iron tool was not heard, and the temple was built quietly—1 Kings 5:15-18; 6:7; cf. Isa. 30:15a.
  4. The church should be built without any “noise” of the self; the only sound in the church that we should hear is the music, “the joyful noise,” of calling on the Lord, rejoicing, praising, praying, thanking, and singing—Psa. 100:1-5; Acts 4:10-12; Phil. 4:4; Heb. 13:15; 1 Thes. 5:16-18; Col. 3:16-17; 1 Chron. 6:31-32.

**VIII. The Bible tells us that it took seven and a half years and the labor of myriads of men to complete the building up of the temple (1 Kings 6:1, 38; 5:13-16; 9:20-21); this indicates that our experience of Christ being renewed, deepened, stabilized, strengthened, intensified, and enlarged in order for us to enter into the reality of the Body of Christ is a gradual “day by day,” “little by little,” and “brighter and brighter” experience in the Body until the day dawns and the morning star rises in our hearts—2 Cor. 4:16; Exo. 23:30; Prov. 4:18; 2 Pet. 1:19.**