

An Attempt To Listen To God
Significance Of The Metals
For The Tabernacle
Part Two

By

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Blue

There are 49 references to “blue” in the scriptures: 6 in Numbers, 3 in Chronicles, 2 in Esther, 1 in Jeremiah, 3 in Ezekiel, and 34 in Exodus. Of these 49 references, 42 are related to the Tabernacle, priesthood, or the Temple. Those observations indicate blue is somehow a foreshadow of the dwelling place of God (Ex. 25:4) and the priesthood of the Lord (Psa. 110:4; Heb. 5:6). On this level, the “blue” then foreshadows our Lord as the dwelling place of God, but He was more than just a man in whom God dwelt, He was “post incarnation” and is forever “God manifest in flesh” (1 Tim. 3:16). Infinite is the truth that in the man Jesus:

- a) “Dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Col. 2:9)
- b) “Of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came who is God over all” (Rom. 9:5)

Young’s literal translation is: “In Him doth tabernacle all the fulness of the Godhead”. Every attribute of deity was in all its fulness in our Lord. When He became a man He did not divest Himself of one iota of deity.

When Christ is referred to as the Son of God, it has nothing to do with paternal generation. Sonship is presented three ways in the scriptures: †

- a) Sonship by birth: Christ was the son of Mary and that related to His humanity.
- b) Sonship by relationship: Elisha was the son of Elijah, Timothy was the son of Paul, that is a spiritual relationship.
- c) Sonship by character: The Lord used this relationship when speaking to the Jews: “Ye are of your father the devil”, and it is in this light the Lord is spoken of as the Son of God.

One of the ways His deity is declared is by:

- a) His titles:
 - i) The Mighty God (Isa. 9:6). This title is used four other times, and every time of Jehovah (Deut. 7:21; Neh. 9:32; Psa. 50:1; 132:2; Isa. 10:21; Jer. 32:18)
 - ii) Emmanuel (Matt. 1:23)
 - iii) The Son of the Highest (Lk. 1:32)

Furthermore, on at least two occasions when God revealed Himself “blue” is associated with Him. Moses wrote: that when the elders of Israel “saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone” (blue) (Ex. 24:10). The same is true of Ezekiel: “Above the firmament . . . was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone” (Ezek. 1:26). It suggests the revelation of God in sovereign rulership. Therefore, three truths are combined:

- a) The blue reflecting Heaven, the dwelling place of God where the Lord as Priest rules for God in perfect adjudication. (Rev. 2-19)
- b) As King will rule for God on the earth as King Priest. (Zech. 6:13)
- c) Then the despised Nazarene and “His dominion shall be from sea even to sea” (Zech. 9:10); and “the whole earth be filled with His glory” (Psa. 72:19).

As the revelation of God we can understand John recording His words: “The Son hath declared Him” (Jn. 1:18) and: “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (Jn. 14:9). On this earth walked a man of flesh and blood, who totally resembled the Father, fully revealed the Father, and perfectly represented the Father. How blessedly true this is. Only He who is God could give the perfect revelation of God and the Father. John records the words of our Lord by showing the identicalness of God and Christ. Beginning with His expression: “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work” (Jn. 5:17), the Jews recognized He was acknowledging His absolute equality with God (v. 18). The Lord then makes a series of profound statements:

- a) “The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father do: for what things soever the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise”, thus He was identical to God in His works. This is then backed up with the “as” and “so” expressions:
 - i) “As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom He will” (v. 21).
 - ii) “As the Father hath life in Himself; so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself” (v. 26).
 - iii) “All men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father (v. 23).

- iv) "The Father . . . hath committed all judgment unto the Son (v. 22).
- v) God "hath given Him authority to execute judgment" (v. 22).

The root word of "blue" is translated "onycha", a chief and principle spice (Ex. 30:34). How fragrant the Lord was to God. Every moment of every day rose as a sweet smelling fragrance to Him. His life was a constantly ascending ointment, void of any "dead flies" (Ecc. 10:1) which caused a stench. It was as "ointment poured forth" (Song of Sol. 1:3) from which God smelt a sweet fragrance. Further notes will be on this ointment under the spices of Calamus, cassia, onycha and myrrh.

Interestingly the word "onycha" comes the word which is translated "lion". On this level the "blue" intimates His might as the lion. He is the "lion which . . . turneth not away for any" (Prov. 30:30). It is this imagery which is used of Jehovah (Hos. 5:14; 13:7), and of our Lord (Rev. 5:5), and in both these contexts it is used relative to judgment.

- a) Let the armies of the world stand against Him, He will not fear, (Psa. 2: Rev. 19:11-21)
- b) Let the religious leaders join with the political, and He like a lion unintimidated by them goes out to meet them:
 - i) "When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron" (Jn. 18:1).
 - ii) "Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon Him, went forth, and said unto them, *Whom seek ye?*" (Jn. 18:4).
 - iii) "And He bearing His cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull" (Jn. 19:17).

This brings another truth to our attention. There was a Sabbath day when a man went out to gather sticks (Num. 15:32). Apparently, for some unknown reason, he had failed to do that during the six previous days, and God had given a command: "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work" (Ex. 20:9). Moses did not know what to do with the man. Perhaps he had an excuse, he had been working very hard all week on the tabernacle, his son was to get them and forgot, etc. Should grace be shown to him, or does the law of God take precedence over excuses? God gave His judgment. The man was to be stoned to death. From that point of time the children of Israel were to put fringes at the bottom of their garments, and were to put on it a "ribband of blue" (Num. 15:38). Every time they bend down or looked down there was the ribband of blue reminding them of the rule of God and as a preventive from sinning. Our Lord never needed to be reminded of the rule of God in His life. He who taught: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind (Matt. 22:37), and added to it: "With all thy strength" (Mk. 12:30), did not just teach this but lived it every moment of every day.

God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, and there to His hearts delight was a man who lived in the reality of the rule of God in His life. He could pray: "Thy kingdom come", and in His life that kingdom ruled, and "Thy will be done on earth" was the character of His entire life. (Matt. 6:10)

Brass

In the historical context the wilderness experience of the children of Israel was just about the end of the "bronze Age" and coming into the iron age. On the historical level, we speak of the bronze age but in reality, there never was such a period. The order was the copper age followed by the iron age, therefore, we read that the Canaanites had "chariots of iron" (Josh. 17:16). It is my suggestion that it was not "brass" that was used in the "laver" (Ex. 30:18), the "vessels of the altar" (Ex. 38:3), or the "altar" (Ex. 39:39); but copper. The reasons for doing so are:

- a) Brass is an alloy, a mixture of metals, and God never used any inferior item to prefigure the person or work of His Son.
- b) Since it was to be used for the "altar" on which the sacrifices were burned, an altar that was made of wood and covered with this metal, it would have to withstand the great temperatures. Copper can withstand much higher temperatures than brass, with a melting point of 1980 degrees F. It would therefore protect the wooden framework and "endure" the fierceness of the flames.
- c) The Hebrew word translated "brass" (Ex. 36:38) or "brazen" (Ex. 38:4) is the same Hebrew word. Quoting from Wilson's Old Testament Word studies: "copper seems frequently intended . . . as brass is a factitious preparation". Strong's Hebrew gives the meaning of the word as "copper". The feet of our Lord are spoken of as "fine brass" (Rev. 1:15), but that word is only found here and in Rev. 2:18, and

Robertson in His "Word Pictures" describes the clause "burnished brass" as a compound of copper, gold and silver. Thus the word in the Old Testament ought to be copper.

Being used for the altar it indicated divine administration revealed in severity of judgment. Consequently, our Lord is seen as having feet like fine copper (brass) (Rev. 1:15; 2:18). It is observed that Christ is seen as the Son of Man acting judiciously (Rev. 1:5), and as the Son of God (Rev. 2:18).

Another feature of copper was its use for binding an individual and therefore strength. As such, it was used for the "fetters of Zedekiah" (2 Kings 25:7) and Samson (Jud. 16:21). Taking the thought of being bound, our Lord was bound by Annas and sent to Caiaphas (Jn. 18:24), and by the elders to Pilate (Matt. 27:2). How amazing this is that the One who came to set us free (Jn. 8:36) was bound, and yet was the only free man who ever lived. Our Lord said: "How am I straitened (bound in) till it be accomplished!" (Lk. 12:50). It was He who told the religious leaders: "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin" (Jn. 8:34) was now bound, and soon to the altar for the sins of those He was speaking to.

It also carries the thought of protection. Goliath of Gath had brass for his body armor (1 Sam. 17:56 ??). To Jeremiah, God said: "I will make thee a fenced brazen wall . . . and they shall not prevail against thee" (Jer. 15:20). Thank God that we have not made "lies our refuge" (Isa. 28:15), but we have fled "for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us" (Heb. 6:18). Christ the man is our "hiding place" (Isa. 32:2) and our protection is by the judgement the Lord has borne (1 Cor. 15:3). Sheltered by Him we are God's peculiar people (Tit. 2:14; 1 Pet. 2:9).

Finally there is the truth of unyielding. The scriptures record:

- a) "And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass." (Lev. 26:19)
- b) Like the ram, it suggests unyielding, but with this difference. With the ram the emphasis is on relentless persistence, the brass indicates no headway being gained. This is defensive. The Ram indicates offensive.
- c) He would not compromise holiness or His devotion to God in the temptations. (Matt. 4:Ref.?)
- d) "I will make thee unto this people a fenced brasen wall . . . but they shall not prevail against thee" (Jer. 15:20)

What a Saviour we have. He never yielded to temptation, but stood firm and resolute. It was irrelevant whither the evil one tempted with earthly prosperity, resulting admiration, or misuse of the scriptures, He never failed.

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

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