

Sermonette by David King

“Refined like Silver”

[start with slide 1 – silver01.jpg]



“Every cloud has a silver lining”, “He was born with a silver spoon in his mouth” — these are just two phrases that mention silver.

[next slide – Silver text and bullion – silver02.jpg]



I want to talk about the qualities of silver and the spiritual analogies for us as Christians.

Let's look at the pure character that God is developing in us because during the Days of Unleavened Bread our thoughts are on Christ's character and purifying our lives to be like Him, by looking at analogies from the refining process of silver, where God has given us important spiritual analogies as He works with us.

Silver is the whitest element. It is rare, strong, corrosion-resistant and unaffected by moisture, vegetable acids or alkalis. It is a metal that can be worked into various shapes, it is quite soft compared to other metals, and is used in making jewellery, coins, photographic film, electronics and batteries.

It has the highest electrical conductivity of any element and the highest thermal conductivity of any metal. The metal naturally occurs in its pure, free form as native silver and as an alloy with gold, known as electrum, as well as in various minerals, such as argentite and chlorargyrite. Most silver is produced as a by-product of copper, gold, lead, and zinc refining.

The chemical symbol for silver is Ag, from the Latin word *argentum*, which is from the ancient Greek word *argéontos*, which means “white and shining”. Silver is the most reflective of all metals, and is used to coat the glass in mirrors.

The Hebrew word for silver is *kespeh*, which is also the word for money. And it is the same in French, where the word for silver and also for money is *argent*. Silver has always been valued highly, and was used for money in

ancient times and obviously in France. In this picture we see a 1 kg bar of silver bullion, which is worth about £300 or more.

[next slide – silversmith – silver03.jpg]



There are several processes used to extract silver from ores, and impurities must be removed by refining to give a pure silver metal, in order for its qualities to be put to the best use.

[next slide – silver plasters – silver04.jpg]



It has been known since ancient times that silver has certain medical properties, which may be one of the reasons why it has been valued so highly. It is anti-bacterial and anti-viral, with cleansing properties and good for healing wounds.

Bacteria are killed on contact with silver, they cannot get immune to it, whereas chemical anti-bacterial products eventually become useless against bacteria.

Recently I have seen deodorant being advertised that contains silver, due to its ability to kill the bacteria that causes BO.

During World War 1 silver compound bandages were carried by medics because of their anti-bacterial properties. The silver fought off infections in wounds and helped save soldiers' lives.

In the 1900s in the USA surgeons used silver stitches. Early settlers in Australia used silver forks and spoons in water tanks to keep the water clean.

People in America used to put a silver dollar in their milk, before refrigeration became commonplace in people's homes, to keep the milk fresh.

[colloidal silver pic – silver05.jpg]



This picture shows a small bottle of colloidal silver. This is a health product which contains pure water with very small particles of very pure silver, at least 99.999% pure, which is a higher purity than for normal silver bullion, which is only 99.9% pure. Sterling silver, by comparison, is only 92.5% pure.

The size of the silver particles is typically around 5 nanometres in size. There are 1 million nanometres in 1 millimetre. This can be used internally or externally in case of wounds, infections, sore throats, etc.

Silver is also used in water purification, and in some water filters. NASA uses silver to purify water on board the space shuttle. It is also used on airliners to ensure passenger safety.

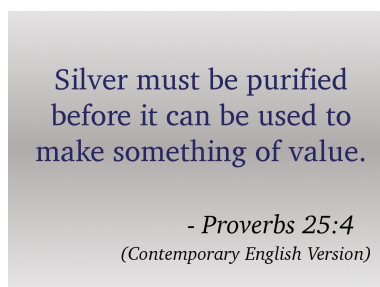
Silver can also be used to purify water in swimming pools and is a safe alternative to chlorine.

[next slide – spoon – silver06.jpg]



Here we see a silver spoon, but as silver is anti-bacterial, it is likely that the rich used silver cutlery, and especially with babies, to avoid infections and illnesses. Silver spoons have also traditionally been used with sugar, in order to keep it free from contamination.

[next slide – Proverbs 25:4 – silver07.jpg]



So what does the Bible have to say about silver?

Let us turn first to Proverbs 25:4, which in the Contemporary English Version reads: “Silver must be purified before it can be used to make something of value.”

[next slide – Prov 25:4 NKJV – silver08.jpg]

Take away the dross from
the silver, and it will go to
the silversmith for jewelry.

- Proverbs 25:4
(New King James Version)

In the New King James Version this is translated as “Take away the dross from silver, and it will go to the silversmith for jewelry”.

This is because silver needs to be made pure and have all the dross removed, for it be of any value.

We, as Christians, are like the silver, but locked up in ore with other materials, with various impurities that must be removed. We are first removed from the ways of this world, as silver is removed from the other materials it is usually found with, such as ores of other metals.

And just as there are various processes for extracting silver and making it pure, so we can be put through a variety of different trials to get to the point where the impurities are removed from us. God knows how to remove those impurities, just as He knows what impurities are there in us, and will choose a variety of methods of purifying each one of us.

[next slide – Psalm 66:10 – silver09.jpg]

For You, O God, have
tested us; You have refined
us as silver is refined.

- Psalm 66:10
(New King James Version)

Now turn to Psalm 66 verse 10, which reads: “For You, O God, have tested us; You have refined us as silver is refined.”

We are all being refined by God the Father for the purpose of reigning with Christ during His millennial reign on Earth, and beyond.

[next slide – silversmith – silver10.jpg]



There is a story about a silversmith refining silver, which you may or may not know. It is on the Internet on various sites and it goes like this:

“There was a group of women in a Bible study on the book of Malachi. As they were studying chapter three, they came across verse three which says: ‘He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver’. This verse puzzled the women and they wondered what this statement meant about the character and nature of God.

One of the women offered to find out about the process of refining silver and get back to the group at their next Bible study. That week this woman called up a silversmith and made an appointment to watch him at work. She didn’t mention anything about the reason for her interest in silver beyond her curiosity about the process of refining silver. As she watched the silversmith, he held a piece of silver over the fire and let it heat up. He explained that in refining silver, one needed to hold the silver in the middle of the fire where the flames were hottest as to burn away all the impurities. The woman thought about God holding us in such a hot spot — then she thought again about the verse, that he sits as a refiner and purifier of silver.

She asked the silversmith if it was true that he had to sit there in front of the fire the whole time the silver was being refined. The man answered that yes, he not only had to sit there holding the silver, but he had to keep his eyes on the silver the entire time it was in the fire. If the silver was left even a moment too long in the flames, it would be destroyed. The woman was silent for a moment.

Then she asked the silversmith, ‘How do you know when the silver is fully refined?’ He smiled at her and answered, ‘Oh, that’s easy — when I see my image in it.’ ”

God is purifying us, and desires to see His own image reflected in us. We have to be purified as silver, and even though it might get hot for us at times, with the various trials we go through, in the end it will be worth it as we will be pure and a reflection of God the Father and Jesus Christ.

God created silver in such a way as to always kill bacteria, and for bacteria to be unable to conquer it.

We, as Christians, are to become the spiritual anti-bacterial product to cleanse the world. That is, we are going to be anti-sin, removing sin from people’s lives in the world tomorrow when we are spirit beings in the Kingdom of God.

We can start now, though, as God refines us, removing our sins and our impurities, to be like an anti-bacterial material like silver, killing bacteria on contact, or to put it another way, to stop sin from existing when we come into contact with it. The Days of Unleavened Bread picture for us putting sin out of our lives, and as we put sin out, we should have the effect on others that causes any sin they might want to commit to not happen, to stop, to cease, to die like bacteria.

We cannot remove sin ourselves or stop people from sinning, but in our actions and example, we should be doing the right thing, so that others are discouraged from sinning, and encouraged to do the right thing. But even if we have no effect on others, because their sins are so great, we must remember as well that we are not yet fully pure, we are still in the process of being purified by God, as silver is refined in the fire. And that also means that as we are in the fire, being purified, it is going to get hot.

[next slide – Daniel 12:10 – silver11.jpg]

Many will be purified,
made white, and refined.

- Daniel 12:10
(New King James Version)

In regards to us being purified, we can turn to Daniel 12:10 where it reads: “Many shall be purified, made white, and refined.”

[next slide – Malachi 3:2-3 – silver12.jpg]

For He is like a refiner's fire and
like launders' soap. He will sit as
a refiner and a purifier of silver;
He will purify the sons of Levi
and purge them as gold and silver,
that they may offer to the LORD
an offering in righteousness.

- Malachi 3:2-3
(New King James Version)

And as mentioned earlier, let us look again at Malachi 3, verses 2 and 3: “For He is like a refiner's fire and like launders' soap. He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the LORD an offering in righteousness.”

[next slide – last one – silver13.jpg]



So in conclusion, we have seen that silver has some great properties, including anti-bacterial, but it has to be purified and the dross removed before it can be of any value. We are being purified and refined by God just as a silversmith purifies and refines silver. We are being refined in the fire but God always has His eyes on us to ensure that we are not there too long. Eventually we will be made pure and reflect God's image for all to see, when we become spirit beings in the Kingdom of God.