

The Hidden Value of Broken Vessels

I became a believer in Yeshua (Jesus) more than 40 years ago, and along with my introduction to Yeshua, I was introduced to gospel music. My wife, who was raised as a believer, had a huge gospel music album collection. As my love for Yeshua grew, so did my love for music that shared the message of the Good News in the sound and style of the music that I listened to before I came to faith.

Thankfully, I came to faith at the same time that contemporary Christian music was growing in popularity and availability. I absolutely fell in love with the music of two different worship artists. Both sang contemporary worship, but each had a unique style and sound. One's music became very popular in churches and was sung by choirs around the U.S. The other was more personal and was played often on the radio. Both were deeply moving and inspiring to me, and I spent hours playing their albums over and over as I prayed and read my Bible.

It would be very difficult to express how meaningful the music of these two men was to me, especially in those early months after I came to faith. It wouldn't be a stretch to say that in the midst of the spiritual battles I was fighting, as a Jew who had newly accepted that Yeshua was the Messiah of Israel, the music of these two men gave me the strength to keep my faith. The music of these two artists was to me like David's harp was to King Saul; it helped me to focus my mind and heart on the things of G-D.

Only a few months after I came to faith and began to listen to the music sung by these two artists, I was hit by what seemed like a nuclear bomb. Both of the men—whose music had become in many ways the rope that anchored my faith in Messiah in the turbulent waters of my world—were caught using cocaine.

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I have to be honest. Even though I didn't know either of these men personally, their arrests and public falls hurt me as deeply as the loss of a close friend. In some ways, it hit me harder than that. The two of them had become a part of my faith walk and my guides into true, deep praise and worship of my G-D. Their songs spoke the words my heart wanted to speak, and their melodies carried my praise to the throne of my King.

Now their mug shots were on the television and plastered on magazine covers. As the truth came out, I found out that the entire time they were using, I was aware of who they were. Before I had heard the first note of one of their songs, they were both heavily addicted to cocaine and participating in the lifestyles of cocaine addicts.

The men who, in my mind and heart, had been leading me into every spiritual battle and victory that I had fought and won as a believer in Yeshua, were in fact sinners, bound themselves in the prisoner of war camp of the adversary of my soul. These men, who were singing songs of victory, had already surrendered.

My world was shattered, my faith shaken; I began to question everything. Was it all fake? If they were both pretending faith the whole time, how could I ever put my trust in anyone again? It was when my mind spoke those words within my head that the voice of G-D spoke to my young heart of faith and I heard these words in my mind: "I never asked you to put your faith in anyone but Me."

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He said it wasn't the music of those men, it wasn't the songs

they sang and it wasn't the words of the songs that caused me to feel the power and anointing of G-D in their music. Those men were simply vessels that carried the anointing. Some vessels are gold, some vessels are silver and some are clay. No matter what the vessel is made out of, or how much value mankind places upon the vessel, the only true value the vessel has lies in what pours out of it.

My heart was hurt because broken vessels were broken. I had begun to give G-D's honor to mankind. I had begun to attribute the anointing to the vessel, instead of to whom it belongs.

I learned a valuable but painful lesson that day that has allowed me to walk confidently for many years. Men can and will fail us because they are all vessels of clay, but G-D will never fail. I learned that the reason the songs these men sang were so powerful and meaningful wasn't because they were singing them. It was because of the presence of the Spirit of G-D within me. G-D anointed the words and the music—not the person.

Throughout my walk with G-D, remembering the words G-D spoke to my heart that day has protected me from the pain and feelings of betrayal I felt in those early months of my faith. Over the years since, every time a singer, rabbi, pastor or leader has publicly failed, I remember that, in reality, what we were seeing were the imperfections of a clay vessel that had become visible. But no matter how broken or failed the vessel is or was, the "water" they poured, even if only for a short time, never lost its value.

A vessel, no matter how beautiful or how broken, is only of value because of what is poured into and out of it. In other words, do not depend on people, because people will fail. Depend only on G-D; He never fails. Also, remember that when G-D uses a vessel and the vessel breaks, it isn't G-D failing; it is the vessel failing.

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