

The Pearl of Great Price

Thursday 17th April 2025

Dear brothers and sisters,

Perhaps the most precious of all the wonders of the deep is the pearl. It is produced by a malady of a shellfish like an oyster, which completely develops itself in 7 years. If it is not secured by the end of that period, the animal dies and the pearl is lost. It consists of glutinous matter, and the secretion may be excited, not so much by the disease as by the irritation of some foreign substance, such as sand sucked within the shell along with the food. The pearl oysters are found in clusters on rocks in the Persian Gulf, and in the Islands of Kis, on the coasts of Ceylon, Java and Bahrain, on the borders of Arabia, Idumea and Israel being not too far distant.

Pearls are well known both to the patriarchs and later to the Hebrews. Speaking

of wisdom Job says, “No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls, for the price of wisdom is above rubies”, Ch.28:18. The pearl oyster shells are obtained by skilled divers. What a beautiful figure of him who came to “seek and to save” that which would be lost for ever, apart from divine intervention! “In the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son,” the skilled Diver, lest we, left to our own devices should perish like the costly pearl in the oyster shell beneath the deep billows. The diver for the natural pearls may risk his life to secure one precious specimen, but the heavenly Diver gave his life a “ransom for all.”

It was you and I he sought, hidden away in the deep waters of the selfish ignorance of the world, like the pearl among the mire and wreckage. What could he see in us? In its rough state, the pearl is nothing desirable; but when it is cut, cleaned and polished, then, how exquisitely beautiful.! Only the diver knows the real value of the pearls; and those

who understand their nature seek them not for what they are, but for what they may become. We are not to be judges of our fellow creatures, because we cannot read the inner workings of the mind, nor the secret impulses of the heart: but God can.

Some of the costliest jewels we may deem only fit for the rubbish heap. Christ, the “pearl of great price” was “despised and rejected of men”. Yet we hope in due time to become pearls of great price, purchased at great cost even the life-blood of our Redeemer; so we must not be surprised if we are forgotten by the world and despised also. Some who may be very attractive now and pass among others as costly pearls, may be found at length to be superficial and gradually fade into oblivion. But the true pearl will never lose its luster, even as the true disciple will “shine more and more unto the perfect Day.” We do not know all. How often do we condemn others for their curious ways without trying to find out if there is not a

pearl beneath their rough exterior! The diamond does not reveal its worth until cut and polished..

The superior excellency of Christ as the merchant in the parable, made known in the gospel, is compared to a priceless pearl, Matt.13:46, and the twelve gates of the city, the new Jerusalem, representing the tribes of the sons of Israel were of pearls. “Each gate severally was one pearl, Rev.21. The names on the pearls represent the 144,000 who are Israelites indeed in their glorified state, with Christ the Jasper Light in the midst of them; and may it be our happy portion to be numbered with them. D.H.H.

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