

A BIBLE STUDY ON JEWELRY

1Timothy 2:9 *In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;*

1Peter 3:3 *Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel;*

1Peter 3:4 *But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.*

1Peter 3:5 *For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:*

The Apostles Peter and Paul appear to say the same thing about the wearing of gold, silver and other jewelry. Simply stated, they prohibit the wearing of jewelry for God-fearing Christians. There are two main arguments they employ – God is more concerned with the “inner or hidden man” and, secondly, the choice not to wear jewelry demonstrates submission to God’s order. Let us begin with the first argument. When God made man, the Bible states, “And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Genesis 2:7). This breath of God is the inner or hidden man that Peter refers to. The precious things of God are always invisible to the flesh: God himself, salvation, heaven and eternal life; they cannot be discovered with the eyes or flesh.

1Corinthians 2:11 *For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.*

Daniel 2:22 *He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.*

This inner and hidden man is not corruptible therefore he cannot be clothed with jewelry which is corruptible – such corruptible and deceptive “clothes” are an offense to the breath of God, the precious soul he has given us. “I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see” (Revelation 3:18). Let us always remember that the flesh is fallen. “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (Romans 7:24). Clearly, it would not make spiritual sense to decorate and beautify a “body of death”. Only cultures that were totally alien to the ways of the true God, surrounded the bodies of their dead with gold and

silver, such as that of Egypt's Pharaoh. The world is still fascinated by the discovery of immense gold and silver in the tomb of Tutankhamun in 1922 by the British archaeologist Howard Carter. The total weight of gold items and jewelry was 1200 kilograms.

God wants us to see the body for what it is: a fallen, sinful material which carries a death sentence. Sin does not want us to be confronted with this sobering truth; it wishes to give attention to the fallen flesh by decorating it with the false glitter and splendor of jewelry. Let us draw an analogy with the earth. The earth does not advertise its treasures openly but conceals gold and silver making them accessible only through patience, sacrifice and even pain. Just as the earth buries its treasures deep in its bosom, Peter exhorts believers that the true treasures are hidden in the inner man. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith" (Galatians 5:22). These are not treasures one easily finds in one's life – they are cultivated over many years through patience, sacrifice and even pain. When we have endured for the sake of the Lord and fought a good fight for the faith, the Lord will give us a crown in heaven.

Revelation 2:10 *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*

Revelation 3:11 *Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.*

Hence the only jewelry we as Christians will ever wear is the crown of glory the Lord will give us as a reward. Only when our Christian lives shine as precious gems testifying to the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ, will the Lord judge us to be worthy of a crown. In other words, to put on jewelry in this world is tantamount to saying that you and I will be the judges of our own value. This is presumptuous and prideful! Consider rap and hip-hop artists. What is the reason for their obsession with jewelry or "bling"? One rap artist, Lil Wayne, apparently employed jewelry worth 13 million USD in one video. According to one entertainment reporter, the penchant for jewelry among rappers was inspired by drug dealers and pimps.

At the time, there were few examples of successful Black businessmen; rather, the men who were feared and respected in Black communities were the drug dealers and the pimps, who donned flashy gold chains, watches, and rings.

So, rappers began to emulate these signs of wealth and power that they'd seen from men who they perceived to be successes. "The rappers wanted to be drug dealers, the drug dealers wanted to be rappers," Brooklyn-born rapper Talib Kweli recalled in the film.¹

¹ <https://www.thedailybeast.com/why-you-shouldnt-be-so-quick-to-judge-rappers-for-their-bling?ref=scroll>

The above is the opposite of the kind of role models the Apostle Peter had in mind. “For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands” (I Peter 3:5). Let us broach the second reason behind the Apostles’ admonition not to wear jewelry - the choice not to wear jewelry demonstrates submission to God’s order. There appears to be a clear connection between jewelry and rebellion in the Bible.

***Ezekiel 28:2** Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God.*

***Ezekiel 28:13** Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.*

Lucifer was blinded by pride because of the covering of precious stones God had given him. Similarly, Nebuchadnezzar was blinded by the glory of Babylon and forgot that God reigns in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomsoever he wishes. Lucifer became Satan because he forgot to keep his eyes on the inner and hidden man rather than the false sense of glory that precious stones bestow. God tested the children of Israel after 430 years of slavery. “But every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians” (Exodus 3:22). We talked earlier about the Egyptians and their fondness for gold as evidenced by the tomb of Tutankhamun. It took 10 mighty plagues to make the Egyptians separate from their gold and silver. Now, what were the children of Israel to do with this gold and silver? Simply give it to Moses so the tabernacle could be built. If they refused, God would not tabernacle among them, their sins would not be forgiven and they would not reach the Land of Canaan.

***Exodus 25:2** Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering.*

***Exodus 25:3** And this is the offering which ye shall take of them; gold, and silver, and brass,*

***Exodus 25:7** Onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod, and in the breastplate.*

***Exodus 25:8** And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.*

Do we want God to dwell in our midst? Then we must surrender the gold and silver to him! We cannot compare the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ with gold and silver. The children of Israel passed this test in the desert. They wanted the presence of God more than to clothe themselves with corruptible gold and silver. God is the true treasure – give him the gold and silver! The Ark of the Covenant, the Menorah, the altar, the altar of incense and so many other items in the tabernacle were overlaid with gold and other precious stones. God is our treasure. It was for this reason that the early church did not hesitate to part with their greatest possessions and treasures because the Lord Jesus was their greatest treasure. If we want God to dwell with us, we must make it clear that he is worth more than any treasure we can possess.

Act 4:34 Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold,

Act 4:35 And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

Sadly, a couple by the name of Ananias and Sapphira decided to shortchange the Lord. Interestingly, Sapphira is where we get the name of the lovely blue gemstone, sapphire. Her name meant a precious stone, but for Sapphira, Jesus was not worth everything. God could not come to her because she was clothed, like Satan, with her treasures. Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, asked Naaman for a talent of silver, and two changes of garments (2 Kings 5:23) but he ended up clothed with the leprosy of Naaman.

Allow me to speak directly with those who have not yet surrendered their jewelry to the Lord Jesus Christ. May I be bold enough to declare that some may not have any visible signs of jewelry upon their persons but they doubt (or deny) the Bible's teaching about the adornment and jewelry. Why not take all the gold and silver and put it at the feet of Jesus! Why not pray, fast and cultivate the inner, hidden man that is God's treasure! Why not repent of any rebellion so we won't become like Satan! Once we do this, the Lord himself will shape our sacrifices into a crown of glory in heaven. The 24 elders received crowns which they gave back to the Lord! Hallelujah!

Rev 4:10 The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

Rev 4:11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.