

# The Jewels of God

## **Our Worth to God**

**John Plunkett**

**Given 14-Oct-03; Tape #FT03-07**

One never knows from where inspiration may come. Some time ago, as I was listening to CBC radio, a Canadian classical music station, I was surprised to hear the beautiful voice of country/bluegrass recording artist, Alison Krauss, singing a song that I had never before heard. The title of the song was "Jewels." The words of that song had a big impact on me. And so they are written below as an introduction to our topic:

When He cometh, when He cometh to make up His jewels;  
All His jewels, precious jewels  
His loved and His own;  
Like the stars of the morning  
His bright crown adorning;  
They will shine in their beauty  
Bright gems for His crown;  
He will gather, He will gather the gems for His Kingdom  
All the pure ones, all the bright ones  
His loved and His own;  
Little children, little children who love their Redeemer  
All the jewels, precious jewels  
His loved and His own

I was inspired by those words. As a somewhat interesting aside, I tried to contact the men who had written that song. I thought I would try and get in touch with them on the Internet and send them an e-mail to ask what scriptures they had used for the lyrics. I soon found out one had died in 1896 and the other in 1905! As it turns out, what I had heard was an old hymn dating back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It is made up of three or so familiar scriptures which we will cover as we progress. We are going to look at just how precious each and every one of us is to our Great God. We will see that we are more precious than even the world's most expensive and valuable jewels.

When we think of precious jewels we usually think of the well known ones: diamonds, sapphires, rubies, and emeralds. But the Bible mentions quite a few other kinds of jewels. It seems, however, that the value of some of these jewels has changed as the years have passed.

The Guinness Book of World Records lists the most valuable precious stone ever sold at auction. It was sold at Sotheby's in Switzerland in May of 1995 and was a flawless one hundred carat diamond. It was valued at 19,858,500 Swiss francs (\$16,548,750 U.S.). But there are other jewels that are even more valuable than these, jewels that will never go to auction because of their historical value. These are priceless!

One is the Hope Diamond, a very well-known gem which resides in the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. A recent article in the Charlotte Observer gives a little background on this diamond. It was once part of the French Crown Jewels and was owned at various times by the French kings Louis XIV, Louis XV, and Louis XVI, as well as the famous Marie-Antoinette. It is 45.52 carats, but was originally cut from an unprocessed stone of 112 carats. That is a huge diamond!

And then there are the British Crown Jewels, estimated at well over one hundred million U.S. dollars! But, again, their real value is simply priceless. There is one crown in the British Crown Jewels called the Imperial Crown of India with 6,200 stones—that is just one crown! There are diamonds, sapphires, rubies, and emeralds. There is one huge emerald on it that is 34 carats!

But there are other jewels that are even more precious. Many years ago, in the time of Moses, when God was planning His tabernacle, He gave a very special talent to a man named Bezaleel. He was given the ability to prepare the jewels and the settings for God's portable temple. These stones were among the most beautiful and valuable ever. And God must have attached quite a bit of importance to them because He devoted two chapters in the book of Exodus to them.

One example is the breastplate of judgment.

Exodus 28:15-21 And you shall make the breastplate of judgment with cunning work; after the work of the ephod you shall make it; of gold, of blue, and of purple, and of scarlet, and of fine twined linen, shall you make it. Foursquare it shall be [please remember this detail] being doubled; a span shall be the length thereof, and a span shall be the breadth thereof. And you shall set in it settings of stones, even four rows of stones: the first row shall be a sardius, a topaz, and a carbuncle: this shall be the first row. And the second row shall be an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond. And the third row a ligure, an agate, and an amethyst. And the fourth row a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper: they shall be set in gold in their inclosings. And the stones shall be with the names of the children of Israel, twelve, according to their names, like the engravings of a signet; every one with his name shall they be according to the twelve tribes.

Many of the jewels that are mentioned in the Bible are probably not very familiar to most of us. Some of these gems we might know and some of them we might think of as being merely semi-precious. But we can be absolutely certain that the stones that God used for the construction of His tabernacle were truly valuable and the most precious that were available at that time.

Now the song lyrics quoted above mention that God's children are His jewels. And this is very true! God the Father has great love for His children. He had great love for the children of Israel. And God gave the children of Israel to His Son Jesus Christ as His first wife. So we can typify them as the daughter-in-law of God the Father.

God gave a symbolic "pet name" to the children of Israel—"Jerusalem!" And God the Father and Jesus Christ lavished many jewels upon this first bride of Jesus Christ. These were both physical and spiritual "jewels."

Ezekiel 16:2-3 Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations, and say, Thus says the Lord Eternal unto Jerusalem?

Ezekiel 16:11-13 I decked you also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon your hands, and a chain on your neck [see the symbolic jewels here]. And I put a jewel on your forehead, and earrings in your ears, and a beautiful crown upon your head. Thus were you decked with gold and silver; and your raiment *was of* fine linen, and silk, and brodered work; you did eat fine flour, and honey, and oil: and you were exceeding beautiful, and you did prosper into a kingdom.

But as we know, this first bride of Jesus Christ became very vain. Ancient Israel became worse than the filthiest harlot. She even took those precious jewels from her husband and gave them away to illicit lovers in order for them to construct their heathen idols and other disgusting objects. God gave her many opportunities to repent, but to no avail. Eventually, a divorce became necessary. The marriage was completely ended by the death of Jesus Christ.

The church of God became Jesus Christ's second fiancée, and now waits as the future bride of Christ, and the future second daughter-in-law of God the Father. Again the church of God receives the symbolic "pet name"—"Jerusalem!" Again God the Father and Jesus Christ will bedeck this bride with priceless jewels!

Revelation 21:9 And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come here, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife.

And what did the angel show John? We expect to see a beautiful woman here. What did he see?

Revelation 21:10-11 And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light *was* like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal

So here we see that the bride is not simply "bejeweled," the Bride of Jesus Christ IS the jewel!

Revelation 21:16 And the city lies foursquare?

This is exactly what we saw back in Exodus 28 describing the construction of the breastplate of judgment. So here we have the holy city and the breastplate both measuring foursquare in

ratio—length to breadth.

Revelation 21:16 ?And the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

Revelation 21:18 And the building of the wall of it was *of* jasper: and the city *was* pure gold, like unto clear glass.

This is a huge wall! It is not built of inferior brick or even stone. There was no rubble in this wall. This wall is going to be built of the highest quality, custom-created jasper stone. We can only imagine how beautiful it is going to be!

Revelation 21:19 And the foundations of the wall of the city *were* garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation *was* jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;

Now the grammar here is a bit confusing. Will the foundations for these huge walls be simply garnished with precious stones? Or are they going to be totally constructed from single, huge jewels of some vast size that we cannot even imagine?!? Is this impossible? These jewels may not even exist on earth at this time. Back in verse 10 we are told that the city descends from God. The city will be constructed by God and His building team in heaven and He is going to bring it down to us!

We may find it difficult to regard these two symbols—the pure, beautifully ornamented bride of Jesus Christ and the vast bejeweled city—as being one and the same. But if we start looking at the clues we see that the walls of the holy city and the foundations of the walls are created out of the most beautiful jewels ever formed. Likewise we see that the Bride of Jesus Christ, who is the daughter-in-law of God the Father, is made up of the children of God the Father who are the jewels of God. Other scriptures tell us that the children of God are the stones of His temple. All of the symbolism fits so very well.

Revelation 21:20-21 The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates *were* twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city *was* pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

So again, some of these stones are familiar to us and considered precious: the pearl, the sapphire, the emerald, the amethyst. Others may be looked upon as merely semi-precious. The specimens we have on earth at this time may be considered of relatively poor quality when compared with the stones yet to be created for the construction of this awesome foundation

built by God Himself!

Some of these types of precious stone were also used in the breastplate of judgment, which the high priest wore as described in Exodus 28. This breastplate was most probably a small, physical symbol of the holy city—the New Jerusalem, the bride of Jesus Christ, the Church of God, and the Kingdom of God!

Let us recap a little. God the Father and Jesus Christ are going to adorn the city, the bride, with priceless jewels. God the Father and Jesus Christ consider the children who make up the bride, to be their most precious jewels. So let us ask a question. Just how precious? Here comes that incredible statement: God the Father loves all of His children at the very same level that He loves His Firstborn! It may be hard to believe, but it is true. The seventeenth chapter of the gospel according to John brings that out. What an amazing love God has for us and how precious we are to Him!

Malachi 3:17-18 And they shall be mine, says the ETERNAL of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spares his own son that serves him.

What are these jewels that Malachi mentions here? The Hebrew word for jewels is "segullah." It means jewel, but it also means "wealth." Apply this to ourselves. It means wealth and "something that is closely guarded and protected." It means "particular or peculiar treasure; special or treasured possession; and valued property." And that is what we are to God the Father!

To whom does this refer? Who has the honor of being counted among God's jewels? Back in verse 17 we see that God's own Son who serves Him is counted among those jewels. And by extension so are all the brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ

Malachi 3:18 Then shall you return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serves God and him that serves him not.

Do we serve God? If we do then we can be counted among the children of God—the jewels of God. How else may God's jewels be identified?

Malachi 3:16 Then they that feared the LORD spoke often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard *it*, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD [notice that this is repeated twice in the same verse], and that thought upon his name.

The proper fear of the Lord is a major factor in being counted among the jewels of God. This is one of the major lessons of the Feast of Tabernacles—to learn to properly fear the Lord; to fear God.

God's jewels are those who are righteous, who meditate on His Name, who fear Him, and who serve Him. They are the elect whom, as the song lyric says, "He will gather when He cometh!"

God inspired Zechariah to write a parallel scripture to Malachi 3:

Zechariah 9:16 And the LORD their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for they *shall be as* the stones [precious stones!] of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land.

Remember the phrase, "lifted up as an ensign" because it is important. Let us first look at the word, "stone," that Zechariah uses. He does not use the same word as Malachi uses. He does not use "*segullah*." He uses the Hebrew word, "*eben*." This word places the emphasis on the practical application and use of precious stones, not simply the ornamental value. Even today, precious stones are used for more than just decorative ornaments. Many precious jewels, as well as precious metal, have practical uses. For instance, gold, diamonds, and chrysolite are used in the manufacture of electronic equipment and the processing of semiconductors.

Again, in Zechariah 9:16, let us look at the Hebrew word used for "crown." "Nezer" means "crown; a type of wreath that is used especially of royalty; the stones that are inset into a crown or diadem." It is also symbolic of "something set apart, of separation and consecration; of dedication as in a king, a priest, or a Nazarite."

So to be included in those jewels that make up God's crown we must be set apart. We must be dedicated. We must be separated. And we must be consecrated.

Now let us look at that phrase "lifted up as an ensign." The Hebrew word for ensign is "*nacac*." It means, "to be conspicuous as a signal." An even better definition is "to gleam from afar." That fits in with shining God's light to this world—"to gleam from afar!"

God has promised you and me some incredible crowns. Incorruptible crowns. Crowns much more valuable than that corruptible Crown of India, with its 6,200 stones! The crowns that God has promised us are crowns of glory, of life, and of righteousness! And those crowns have already been assigned to us. But Jesus Christ has warned us that we have to "hold fast" to those crowns so that no man will take them. We have to hold on to our crowns. We have to treat them as special. We have to treat our calling as special and very, very precious.

How do we hold on to our crowns? Jesus Christ gives us instructions through the apostles Paul, James, and John. He tells us through them that to make sure we obtain our crowns we need to love God. He tells us that we must strive for mastery over ourselves, that we must be temperate in all things, and that we need to face and endure temptations, trials, tribulations, and sufferings with courage. And He tells us that we must be faithful, even to the point of death.

I cannot move on without a reminder of those who have already died in the faith. We all have had dear friends whose lives were the epitome of faithful courage and now sleep until the resurrection from the dead. We valued their positive, faithful examples. We remember them and are inspired by those memories, whatever they may be, of steadfast obedience in the face of fiery trials. Their crowns are assured! We need to assure the possession of our crowns, too. We

need to be faithful even to the point of death!

Revelation 2:10 Fear none of those things which you shall suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that you may be tried; and you shall have tribulation ten days:

We have to remember that gold, pure gold, has to be purified in a very hot fire. In the very creation of these precious jewels, God used great heat and massive pressure. And to beautify and perfect those jewels for our use we use cutting and polishing techniques. We can apply these symbols to the trials, the tribulations, and the sufferings through which we might be going. So again?

Revelation 2:10 you shall have tribulation ten days: be you faithful unto death, [here is a promise] and I will give you [says God] a crown of life.

What a wonderful, wonderful promise!

When we are going through temptations, trials, and suffering, please remember—God wants us to remember—how precious we are to Him. He has a fabulous crown put aside for us. He can hardly wait to lavish us with gems beyond our wildest dreams. But most important of all, WE are the very jewels of HIS crown! WE are more precious to God than this world's most valuable treasure, crowns, and jewels!