

Coach House Church BEACONS

HIDDEN TREASURES // GOLD //

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Depending on your beliefs and your point of view will determine how you think gold was formed at the beginning of time. Whereas diamonds and pearls, among other precious gems have been formed as the result of huge amounts of pressure and the highest temperatures, gold was not formed in the same way.

Some scientists believe gold was formed within the stars and as they collided, at the beginning of time, then gold particles dropped to earth. My view is that gold was created at the beginning of time as part of all things that were created by God as it tells us in the bible, in the book of beginnings – Genesis.

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Gold deposits, created as part of earth's original structure, have been brought to the surface to be more accessible through mining or panning. Volcanic eruptions bring rock and mineral deposits to the surface. The movement of the tectonic plates, the jigsaw pieces which make up the earth's crust, mean that layers of rock and minerals shift places. As rocks erode the gold can be washed along river beds along with boulders and stones and gravel.

We've all heard of the great gold rushes in history, of people panning for gold, hoping to discover their fortunes and live happily ever after without a financial care in the world. We know that gold is used as a currency and as a way to store wealth. There are gold ingots deposited in underground vaults as proof of a nation's worth. No-one would doubt its value or how precious it is, economically or aesthetically.

This has not changed since the beginning of time. Gold was used in the inner sanctuary of the temple, the holy of holies as it says in Hebrews 4, to convey just how special this place was.

In that room were a gold incense altar and a wooden chest called the Ark of the Covenant, which was covered with gold on all sides. Inside the Ark were a gold jar containing manna, Aaron's staff that sprouted leaves, and the stone tablets of the covenant.

In the bible, Gold is used to symbolise characteristics of God. For instance, one symbol we recognise easily is that of royalty. We expect a King to have a golden crown and to carry a golden sceptre. One of the gifts given to Jesus by the travellers from the East, the Magi, was gold. Even at his birth, Jesus' royalty, his position as King, was acknowledged.

But why gold? Well there are certain properties of this precious metal. For one, it does not tarnish or rust. It doesn't decay. It remains the same and has always kept its value and worth. James 1 tells us that God never changes.

Another feature is that Fire doesn't destroy gold. It just makes it purer. This reflects the purity and holiness of God. 1 Peter 1:7 also tells us that faith that is put under pressure makes the faith stronger and purer as we learn to put our trust in God and rely on him more.

Gold lasts forever. And as such, it has been suggested that most of the gold mined since the flood is still readily available but in recycled form as jewellery, computer components and lots more.

In this way – it reflects the immortality of God. The psalms talk of God as everlasting. (Psalm 41, psalm 106, psalm 145) Jesus is described as the alpha and the omega, the first and the last, beginning and the end.

Proverbs also reminds us, however, of things that are better than earthly gold: a good reputation (Proverbs 22) wisdom (Proverbs 3) following God's instructions (Proverbs 8) wise words (proverbs 20) . And Peter also promotes something better than silver or gold when speaking to a man begging by the temple gate. When he asks for money,

Peter tells him:

"I don't have any silver or gold for you. But I'll give you what I have. In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, get up and walk!"

Later, Peter talks of a priceless inheritance that is kept in heaven for us, beyond the reach of change and decay. Much more valuable than money, pointing to a heavenly treasure.

In Revelation 21, John is given a vision of heaven by God, a picture of the New Jerusalem, the Holy City. In this vision, heaven and the precious gems and metals, reflect the glory of God.

10 So he took me in the Spirit[b] to a great, high mountain, and he showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. 11 It shone with the glory of God and sparkled like a precious stone—like jasper as clear as crystal. 12 The city wall was broad and high, with twelve gates guarded by twelve angels. And the names of the twelve tribes of Israel were written on the gates. 13 There were three gates on each side—east, north, south, and west. 14 The wall of the city had twelve foundation stones, and on them were written the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

We may not see many precious stones, vast hoards of gold or other amazing treasures here on earth. But the bible tells us that, those who believe and trust in Jesus, who have asked for forgiveness for all the times we have missed the mark of perfection required by a Holy God, those who call Jesus, Lord, will one day see amazing treasures directly.

Revelation continues with John's vision:

18 The wall was made of jasper, and the city was pure gold, as clear as glass. 19 The wall of the city was built on foundation stones inlaid with twelve precious stones:[e] the first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, 20 the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. 21 The twelve gates were made of pearls—each gate from a single pearl! And the main street was pure gold, as clear as glass. 22 I saw no temple in the city, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. 23 And the city has no need of sun or moon, for the glory of God illuminates the city, and the Lamb is its light. 24 The nations will walk in its light, and the kings of the world will enter the city in all their glory. 25 Its gates will never be closed at the end of

day because there is no night there. 26 And all the nations will bring their glory and honor into the city. 27 Nothing evil[f] will be allowed to enter, nor anyone who practices shameful idolatry and dishonesty—but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

What an amazing place.



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