



The Apostolic Johannite Church Narthex Instructional Series

The Pearl in Gnostic Thought

Pearls

- What is a pearl? What are its physical properties?
- Where does it come from?
- What makes it a good symbol for Gnosis?
- sobrietystones.com has this to say about the pearl:

"Symbol of Feminine Wisdom, Purity, and Spiritual Transformation "

Metaphysical:

Pearls symbolize Purity, Spiritual Transformation, Charity, Honesty, Wisdom and Integrity, all the best within us. Pearls provide a clear vehicle for the advancing states of wisdom, as well as a clean channel for receipt of spiritual guidance.

Pearls can stimulate your femininity and help with self acceptance. They lift your spirits and make you feel calm and beautiful. They remind us to walk with Dignity.

Pearls not only provide a mirror in which to see ourselves, but give us insight into how we appear to others.

The ragged, rough grain of sand, transformed over time slowly growing into a object of great value and beauty. With it's humble beginnings, Pearls symbolize innocence and a pure heart, and help us get in touch with the simple honest things of life.

White: Symbol of pure heart and mind; innocence, faith.

Gold and Black: Also for prosperity.

Pink: Works especially with the heart Chakra.

Physical:

For solar plexus Chakra (digestion, stomach, immunity) and emotional stress.

Keywords:

Purity , honesty, innocence and integrity, concentration, focus, meditation, serenity, tranquility and wisdom.

Elements: Water

Astrological Sign: Cancer and Gemini

Vibrates to the number 7



Gnostic texts containing references to the Pearl

- The Hymn of the Pearl, also called The Hymn of the Robe of Glory or the Hymn of the Soul, which is part of a larger work called The Acts of Thomas.

The Hymn of the Pearl can be read on the Gnostic Society Library at <http://www.gnosis.org/library/hymnpearl-old.htm>

Wikipedia has this to say about the Acts of Thomas:

Acts of Thomas is a series of episodic Acts that occurred during the evangelistic mission of Judas Thomas ("Judas the Twin") to India. It ends with his "martyrdom" in which he dies pierced with spears because he'd earned the ire of the monarch Misdaeus because of his conversion of Misdaeus' wives and a relative, Charisius. He was imprisoned while converting Indian followers won through the performing of miracles.

Embedded in the Acts of Thomas at different places according to differing manuscript traditions is a Syriac hymn, The Hymn of the Pearl, (or Hymn of the Soul), a poem that gained a great deal of popularity in mainstream Christian circles. The Hymn is older than the Acts into which it has been inserted, and is worth appreciating on its own.

- The Gospel of Thomas

(76) Jesus said, "The kingdom of the father is like a merchant who had a consignment of merchandise and who discovered a pearl. That merchant was shrewd. He sold the merchandise and bought the pearl alone for himself. You too, seek his unfailing and enduring treasure where no moth comes near to devour and no worm destroys."

(93) <Jesus said,> "Do not give what is holy to dogs, lest they throw them on the dung-heap. Do not throw the pearls to swine, lest they [...] it [...]."

- The Gospel of Philip

52. The pearl which is cast down into the mire is not despised, nor if it is anointed with balsam oil is it (more) valued. But rather it has its great worth to its owner at all times. So it is with the Sons of God— whatever happens to them, in their heart they still have the great value to their Father.



Canonical references to the Pearl

- Matthew 7:6 "Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces. (compare to Thomas 93)
- Matthew 13:45-46 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it. (compare to Thomas 76)
- Revelation makes some references to pearls, but in the sense that merchants are in trouble when the end comes, so I'm not including them here. Also there are references in other place to rich women wearing pearls, but again, not in an esoteric sense so they are also not included.

