



EARS PIERCED? JEWELRY & THE BIBLE

"And I will give you a crown  of life" (Rev 2:10) · Part 1: Old Testament




by Ingo Sorke, PhD

 **κόσμος kosmos:** world, mankind, earth; adornment, decoration, order, regular disposition; ornament, embellishment
[Mounce Greek Dictionary listings; Bible translation: NKJV or as indicated]

★ **The Land of Havila** "where there is gold. 12 And the gold of that land is good" (Gen 2:10-12).

Cover-Up. By "a violent wind ... the silver and gold, the choice wood and precious stones, which had enriched and adorned the world before the Flood, and which the inhabitants had idolized, were concealed from the sight and search of men, the violent action of the waters piling earth and rocks upon these treasures, and in some cases even forming mountains above them. God saw that the more He enriched and prospered sinful men, the more they would corrupt their ways before Him. The treasures that should have led them to glorify the bountiful Giver had been worshiped, while God had been dishonored and despised" (PP 107).


 **Dress. Code.** "And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed" (Gen 2:25). "The sinless pair wore no artificial garments; they were clothed with a covering of light and glory, such as the angels wear. So long as they lived in obedience to God, this robe of light continued to enshroud them" (PP 45). *Your Skin: 8 lbx, 2 m2!*

The Golden Rule

Currency & Wealth (Gen 24:22, 35; 2 Chr 32:27; 1 Kgs 10:2) - Wedding (Jer 2:32; Isa 49:18; 61:10)
Victory (Ex 3:22; 11:2; 12:36) - Status (2 Kgs 11:12; Ps 21:3; 89:39; 132:18) - Religious (Num 13:23; Deut 8:8)
Idolatry (Ezek 23:40; Isa 3:16-3; Jer 4:30; 2 Kgs 9:30; Gen 35:2; Josh 24:14, 23; Hos 2:13, 15)

Externals: "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For *the LORD* does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart" (1 Sam 16:7).

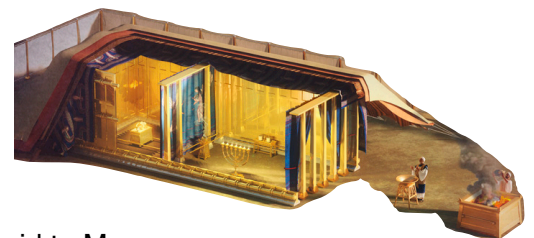
Note: Often misunderstood, this text is against being swayed by mere externals at the expense of considering a person's heart and character. It does not negate adornment as a spiritual issue.

 **Jacob:** "Put away the foreign gods ... among you, purify yourselves, and change your garments. 3 Then let us arise and go up to Bethel; and I will make an altar there to God, who answered me in the day of my distress and has been with me in the way which I have gone." 4 So they gave Jacob all the foreign gods which *were* in their hands, **and the earrings which were in their ears;** and Jacob hid them under the terebinth tree which *was* by Shechem" (Gen 35:2-4).


High Priest: "You shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother for glory and for beauty" (Ex 28:2).


Sanctuary: Soil → Cloth → Bronze → Silver → Gold


From this day forward: "Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; for I will not go up in your midst, lest I consume you on the way, for you *are* a stiff-necked people." 4 **And when the people heard this bad news, they mourned, and no one put on his ornaments.** 5 For the LORD had said to Moses, "Say to the children of Israel, 'You *are* a stiff-necked people. I could come up into your midst in one moment and consume you. **Now therefore, take off your ornaments, that I may know what to do to you.**'" 6 So the children of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments by Mount Horeb. **So the Israelites remained stripped of their jewelry from Mount Horeb onward**" (Ex 33:3-6 HCSB). LXX: ἀπό τοῦ ὄρους τοῦ Χωρηβ [from Mount Horeb]



Kohlenberger/Mounce Hebrew: $\eta\eta$ *min* - marker of a source or extension from a source: from, out of, of; temporal: since, after ... So Koren Tanakh, WEB, ASV, NASB1977, CJB, Zürcher, Menge, Einheits, Luther21, Buber


 "They came, both men and women, as many as had a willing heart, and brought earrings and nose rings, rings and necklaces, all jewelry of gold, that is, every man who made an offering of gold to the Lord" (Ex 35:22).

 **Court Case** ... I once accompanied a young man from my church who had to go to court for DWI. He had told me that he would tell the judge xyz - but the ordeal quickly changed his tone to "Yes, Ma'am". All his jewelry (various piercings) had to come off under judgment! Not to mention the change in attire for boot camp.


 A student of mine on a Christian campus had these huge spacers in his ear. When I ran into him at a home improvement store they were missing from said ears. His comment: the store won't let me wear them. *Go figure!*


Atonement. "Therefore we have brought an offering for the LORD, what every man found of ornaments of gold: armlets and bracelets and signet rings and earrings and necklaces, **to make atonement [כַּפָּרָה kāpar] for ourselves before the LORD.**" 51 So Moses and Eleazar the priest received the gold from them, all the fashioned ornaments. ... 54 And Moses and Eleazar the priest received the gold from the captains of thousands and of hundreds, and brought it into the tabernacle of meeting as a memorial for the children of Israel before the LORD" (Numbers 31:50-54).


 **Paint Job.** Jezebel "put paint on her eyes and adorned her head, and looked through a window" (2 Kings 9:30).


 **Value Proposition:** "She *is* more precious than rubies, and all the things you may desire cannot compare with her" (Prov 3:15). "Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies" (Prov 31:10).

Wisdom "cannot be purchased for gold, Nor can silver be weighed *for* its price. 16 It cannot be valued in the gold of Ophir, In precious onyx or sapphire. 17 Neither gold nor crystal can equal it, Nor can it be exchanged for jewelry of fine gold. 18 No mention shall be made of coral or quartz, For the price of wisdom *is* above rubies. 19 The topaz of Ethiopia cannot equal it, Nor can it be valued in pure gold" (Job 28:15-19).

 **Shame.** "Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with outstretched necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, making a jingling with their feet, 17 therefore the Lord will strike with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will uncover their secret parts." 18 In that day the Lord will take away the finery: The jingling anklets, the scarves, and the crescents; 19 the pendants, the bracelets, and the veils; 20 the headdresses, the leg ornaments, and the headbands; the perfume boxes, the charms, 21 and the rings; the nose jewels, 22 the festal apparel, and the mantles; the outer garments, the purses, 23 and the mirrors; the fine linen, the turbans, and the robes. 24 And so it shall be: Instead of a sweet smell there will be a stench; Instead of a sash, a rope; Instead of well-set hair, baldness; instead of a rich robe, a girding of sackcloth; and branding instead of beauty. 25 Your men shall fall by the sword, and your mighty in the war" (Isaiah 3:16-25).

 "And when you are plundered, What will you do? Though you clothe yourself with crimson, Though you adorn yourself with ornaments of gold, Though you enlarge your eyes with paint, In vain you will make yourself fair; Your lovers will despise you; They will seek your life" (Jeremiah 4:30).

 In 2017 my oldest son and I explored the outskirts of Moscow, Russia 🇷🇺. As we approached an Orthodox Church our tour guide stopped outside the entrance and said, "I can't go in. I'm wearing jeans and make-up."

 **Adornment - Harlotry!** "But you trusted in your own beauty, played the harlot because of your fame, and poured out your harlotry on everyone passing by who would have it" (Ezek 16:15).

 **Ezekiel 28:12-17: Perfection → Corruption**

God: "She decked herself with her earrings and jewelry, and went after her lovers; but Me she forgot" (Hosea 2:13).

Ring Ceremony. "In that day," says the LORD of hosts, "I will take you, Zerubbabel My servant, the son of Shealtiel," says the LORD, "and will make you like a signet ring; for I have chosen you," says the LORD of hosts" (Haggai 2:23).

 **Skin Deep: Tattoos** "You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor tattoo any marks on you: I am the LORD" (Lev 19:28).

 Bernadine Healy, MD, *USNEWS & World Report*, Aug 4/11 '08, p. 69:

- >50% wished they hadn't done it
- National Center for Toxicological Research: low carcinogens in tattoo ink
- Laser irradiation: toxic molecules from red/yellow pigments increased 70x!
- FDA unregulated (contra cosmetics) · no blood donation 12 months
- Caution: MRI! · Epidural during delivery: pigmentation can enter spinal canal



"From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" (Gal 6:17).

My recommendation for platform decorum to a local church

Practical Application

Out of respect for the congregation and reverence to God platform participants and leaders are kindly requested to maintain modesty and propriety in dress and deportment. Men are urged to wear a tie and/or jacket; ladies please refrain from jewelry (Gen 35:4; Ex 32:2-3; 33:6; 35:22; Num 31:50; 1Tim 2:9; 1Pet 3:3-5; Rev 12 vs 17:3-5). [Goal: not outward compliance but heartfelt cooperation]