

PEARL STORY

The pearl has symbolized many things throughout time and has been incorporated into the mythology of virtually every culture. In many ancient cultures, pearls were worn as a symbol of wealth and prestige and were the prized possessions of royalty. Pearls represented purity, perfection, and feminine charm and were believed to ward off evil and cure physical ailments. St. Augustine deemed the pearl to be a symbol of Christ after evaluating a passage in the Bible that gives each of the twelve apostles a specific gemstone in his honor, including the pearl. There are actually several passages that refer to pearls, the most well-known is the “pearly gates” of heaven.

Pearls have been treasured for thousands of years, giving them the title of the world’s oldest gem. Of all the precious stones, the pearl is the only one that is created by a living creature. When a grain of sand from the bottom of the ocean or a river works its way into the body of an oyster, the organism covers the irritant with thin layers of calcium to protect itself from the discomfort caused by this unfamiliar source of agitation. Over time, the foreign body loses its abrasiveness as it becomes smooth and spherical in shape. Because of its origin, the pearl symbolizes not only the life that is created through adversity but also the mysterious force that gives life.

The slim probability that a grain of sand would transform into something as precious as a pearl, may be even more likely though, than the probability that a human would be able to find and obtain this phenomenon. Harvesting natural pearls is both hard work and a hazardous undertaking. Pearl fishers work in pairs: one dives deep into the sea, while the other stays above to hold the diver’s lifeline, pulling both the diver and the treasure up to the surface after a predetermined period of time. So you see, in order to find a pearl, you must be both independent and dependent. Because of the difficult nature of its harvest, the pearl represents the hard-won goal after you strive for something with the help of a lifeline – such as a mentor.

The pearl symbolizes overcoming adversity through hard work, persistence, and tenacity. Though its beginning seems small and humble, with time it becomes something that it might never be alone: a success that is appreciated by all those who are inspired by it.