

The Blessing and Danger of Wealth

Genesis 24: ³⁴ So he said, “I am Abraham’s servant. ³⁵ The LORD has greatly blessed my master, and he has become wealthy; he has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male and female slaves, camels and donkeys. ³⁶ And Sarah my master’s wife bore a son to my master when she was old, and he has given him all that he has.”

Deuteronomy 8: ¹² “When you have eaten your fill and have built fine houses and live in them ¹³ and when your herds and flocks have multiplied and your silver and gold is multiplied and all that you have is multiplied, ¹⁴ then do not exalt yourself, forgetting YHWH your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ¹⁷ Do not say to yourself, ‘My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth.’ ¹⁸ But remember YHWH your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, so that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your ancestors, as he is doing today.

Psalms 112: ¹ Praise the LORD!

Happy are those who fear the LORD,
who greatly delight in his commandments.

³ Wealth and riches are in their houses,
and their righteousness endures forever.

⁴ They rise in the darkness as a light for the upright;
they are gracious, merciful, and righteous.

⁵ It is well with those who deal generously and lend,
who conduct their affairs with justice.

⁹ They have distributed freely; they have given to the poor;
their righteousness endures forever;
their horn is exalted in honor.

Psalms 49: ⁵ Why should I fear in times of trouble,
when the iniquity of my persecutors surrounds me,

⁶ those who trust in their wealth
and boast of the abundance of their riches?

¹⁰ When we look at the wise, they die;
fool and dolt perish together
and leave their wealth to others.

¹¹ Their graves are their homes forever,
their dwelling places to all generations,
though they named lands their own.

¹² Mortals cannot abide in their pomp;
they are like the animals that perish.

Habakkuk 2: ⁵ Moreover, wealth is treacherous;
the arrogant do not endure.

They open their throats wide as Sheol;
like Death they never have enough.

Matthew 6: ²⁴ “No one can serve two masters, for a slave will either hate the one and love the other or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.”

Luke 18: ¹⁸ A certain ruler asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” ¹⁹ Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. ²⁰ You know the commandments: ‘You shall not commit adultery. You shall not murder. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness. Honor your father and mother.’” ²¹ He replied, “I have kept all these since my youth.” ²² When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “There is still one thing lacking. Sell all that you own and distribute the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.” ²³ But when he heard this, he became sad, for he was very rich. ²⁴ Jesus looked at him and said, “How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.” ²⁶ Those who heard it said, “Then who can be saved?” ²⁷ He replied, “What is impossible for mortals is possible for God.” ²⁸ Then Peter said, “Look, we have left our homes and followed you.” ²⁹ And he said to them, “Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God ³⁰ who will not get back very much more in this age and in the age to come eternal life.”

Luke 12: ³² “Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. ³³ Sell your possessions and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. ³⁴ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Acts 2: ⁴³ Awe came upon everyone because many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵ they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need.

1 Timothy 6: ⁶ Of course, there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment, ⁷ for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it, ⁸ but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. ⁹ But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains. ¹⁷ As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches but rather on God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. ¹⁸ They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share.

Philippians 4: ¹¹ I have learned to be content with whatever I have. ¹² I know what it is to have little, and I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need. ¹³ I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

James 1: ⁹ Let the brother or sister of humble means boast in having a high position ¹⁰ and the rich in having been humbled, because the rich will disappear like a flower in the field. ¹¹ It is the same way with the rich; in the midst of a busy life, they will wither away.