

GENEROSITY

F O R U M

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THE GOODNESS OF MATERIAL POSSESSIONS

Genesis 1-2: God Creates a *Good* Material World

Genesis 12-50: Rich and Godly Patriarchs

The Mosaic Law

Private Property as Good (see esp. Num. 26)

The Jubilee Principle (Lev. 25)

Cycles of Obedience and Disobedience in the Promised Land

Reward for Righteousness and Punishment for Wickedness (esp. in Poetry/Wisdom Lit.)

E.g., Psa. 112; Prov. 10:3, 21:5

The Ultimate Restoration of Israel (esp. Isa. 60-66)

Jesus' Teaching

Ask and you will receive (Matt. 7:7-11/Lk. 11:9-13)

The Friend at Midnight (Luke 11:5-8)

The Unjust Judge (Luke 18:1-8)

The Parables of the Talents and Pounds (Matt. 25:14-30; Luke 19:11-27)

Responses to His Anointing (Luke 7:36-50; Mark 14:3-9 pars.)

Miracles of Physical Healing in the Gospels and Acts (see esp. Acts 3:6)

Paul's Letters

The importance of work (1 Thess. 5:14; 2 Thess. 3:6-15)

Supporting "full-time Christian workers" (1 Cor. 9:1-18)

Rewards for godliness (esp. 2 Cor. 9:6-15)

The "thankless thank you" (Phil. 4:10-20)

Good gifts given for our enjoyment (1 Tim. 6:17b)

The Eternal State (We can have it all!—Rev. 21-22)

THE DANGERS OF MATERIAL POSSESSIONS

Genesis 3: The Fall and Its Effects

The Mosaic Law

Safeguards Protecting against the Idolatrous Use of Possessions

The whole sacrificial system (Lev. 1-9)

Laws against interest (Exod. 22:25-27; Deut. 23:19-20)

Sabbath, sabbatical year and jubilee (Exod. 23:10-12; Lev. 25:1-7)

Taxes, tithes and offerings (Lev. 27:30-33; Deut. 14:22-29; Exod. 30:13)

Other laws concerned with justice for poor

gleaning, on aliens, sliding scales, not taking livelihood as pledges, paying wages
on time, impartiality in courts

Ill-Gotten Gains and Innocent Victims (esp. in Poetry/Wisdom Lit.)

E.g., Psa. 73; Prov. 16:15-17; Ecclesiastes!

Israel's Sins Denounced by the Prophets

Worshiping costly idols (e.g., Isa. 2:7-8)

Putting "Church" above morality (Jer. 7:4-7)

Extorting, robbing and oppressing the poor (Amos 5:11-12)

Boasting in wealth (Amos 4:1, 6:4-6)

Financial motives central to ministry (Mic. 3:11)

Jesus' Teaching

Lay up treasures in heaven rather than on earth (Matt. 6:19-34/Luke 12:33-34)

The seed among the thorns (Mark 4:18-19 pars.)

The rich fool (Luke 12:13-21)

The rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31)

What does it profit a person. . . ? (Mark 8:36 pars.)

The rich young ruler (Mark 10:17-22 pars.)

Acts of the Apostles

Ananias and Sapphira (5:1-11) and "Simony" (8:18-23)

Pagan economics masked as religion (16:17-24; 19:23-41)

James' Epistle

The great reversal—of rich and poor (1:9-11)

The dangers of favoritism (2:1-7, 14-17)

The wanna-be rich and the really rich (4:13-17, 5:1-6)

Paul's Letters

The disproportionate role of the rich in the problems at Corinth (1 Cor.)

The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil (1 Tim 6:3-10)

The End-Times Empire (Rev. 18)

USING MATERIAL POSSESSIONS FOR GOD'S GOOD PURPOSES

Patriarchal Generosity (Gen. 13; 14:20, 23; 31:38-42; 41:57; Job)

The Purposes of Many Laws (already surveyed)—and particularly the 1/3 tithe for the poor

Prophetic Calls to Israel--reversing what they were doing wrong, including:

Lament (including for own and people's sins) (Lamentations)

Seek welfare of the city (Jer. 29:7)

Seek justice for the marginalized (Mic. 6:8)

Generous giving (Mal. 3:8-10)

Jesus' Teaching

Blessed are the poor (Luke 6:20 par.) and the Nazareth Manifesto (Luke 4:16-21)

Giving alms (Matt. 6:1-4), to beggars (5:42 par.) and tithes (23:23 par.)

Taxes, Jewish (Matt. 17:24-27) and Romans (Mark 12:15-17 pars.)

Spiritual priorities, but often with economic applications, esp. in parables

Hid treasure and pearl of great price (Matt. 13: 44-46)

Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37)

Unjust steward (Luke 16:1-13)

Gospels Models of Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10) and Widow (Mark 12:41-44 par.)

Acts' Models of Tabitha (Acts 9:36) and Cornelius (10:31)

Paul's Letters

Agreement on remembering the poor (Gal. 2:10)

Principles for the collection (1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8-9)

Giving should be sacrificial (2 Cor. 8:1-9), proportional (8:10-15), and accountable (8:16-9:5)

Keep paying those taxes (Rom. 13:7-8)

1 John 3:16-18: How to recognize true love

THE RESULTING PATTERN: NEITHER POVERTY NOR RICHES

The Manna Economy in the Wilderness (Exod. 16:16-18)

A Golden Mean? (Prov. 30:8-9)

Our Daily Bread (Matt. 6:12/Luke 11:3)

Acts of the Apostles

Early Christian communalism (2:42-27; 4:32-37)

Helping the Greek widows (6:1-4)

Agabus and famine relief (11:27-30)

Obedience to Paul's Principles (Rom. 15:24-27)