

## Neither Poverty nor Riches a Blessing

(Copyright ©1truth1law.com 2013)

Poverty a Blessing (Lk. 6:20, 24; Jas. 2:5).

Riches a Blessing (Job 22:23-24; 42:12; Prov. 10:15).

Neither Poverty nor Riches a Blessing (Prov. 30:8-9).

Almighty God uses figurative language throughout His word. For instance, he uses words like lion, serpent, dragon, adversary, and beast to describe Satan and/or his methods of interacting with mankind. In like manner, God uses the words like “poor”, “poverty” and “contrite” to describe a state of mind, or one’s attitude toward Him,

Blessed are **the poor in spirit**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Mt. 5:3; emphasis added; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted).

In the text above, Christ described those who have a humble and teachable attitude as being “poor in spirit.” He was not stating that they would be blessed if they were “poor in physical possessions”. With this in mind, scriptures in the heading of this study that are dealing with a humble or teachable attitude will be examined first. Following this, the balance of the scriptures will be discussed,

Then he (Christ) lifted up his eyes toward his disciples, and said: ‘Blessed are you poor (in spirit; cf. Mt. 5:3), for yours is the kingdom of God’ (Lk. 6:20; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Luke’s account, of Christ’s statement in Matthew 5:3, is slightly different. However, each of the four gospels varies because they are personal observations and each individual’s perspective is bound to be different (see study: There Were Two Women Who Came To The Sepulcher (Part 1)). Because Luke’s account was more abbreviated than Matthew’s, the two words “in spirit” were not included. However, Matthew did record these two words, which might explain why those who wish to discredit God’s word conveniently omit Matthew’s account of the same event.

If God called only the poor in physical possessions, He would be a respecter of persons and scripture states that He is not (2Pet. 3:9). Also, the symbolism associated with the ‘ransom money’ that each Israelite had to pay on the Day of Atonement proves that God does not prefer one class of people over another (Ex. 30:12-15). The main purpose of the next text was to correct some church members who were showing favoritism between classes of people. Again, it is untenable that God would do this when some brethren were reprimanded for it. Obviously, God does call some poor people and this is mentioned in this next section of scripture. However, He does not call only those who are poor in physical possessions (cf. Mt. 27:57),

**Have you** (some church members) **not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?** <sup>5</sup>Listen, my beloved brethren; Has God not chosen (some of) the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him? (Jas. 2:4-5).

Granted not many wealthy and powerful people are called by God at this time, but it is totally inaccurate to claim that God only calls those who are poor in physical possessions,

For you see (consider) your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble (well-born) are called (1Cor. 1:26; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Now the scriptures dealing with “riches being a blessing” will be examined. The first text was explained in a previous study (see study: Worldly Prosperity A Curse and A Bar to Future Reward). It is a commentary by Eliphaz who thought that Job’s sufferings were due to some sin he had committed and he thought that, if Job repented, God would restore his fortunes. However, Job’s sufferings were not related to sin (cf. Job 1:8),

If you return to the Almighty, you will be built up; you will remove iniquity (sin; 1Jn. 3:4) far from your tents. <sup>24</sup>Then you will lay your gold in the dust, and the gold of Ophir among the stones of the brooks (Job 22:23-24; Ed. note in parenthesis).

Following Job’s grueling trial, God restored his possessions as confirmed in Job 42:12. The next scripture is simply commenting on the fact that rich people tend to trust in their possessions. Also their riches can provide them with power to influence affairs within their community, or country. In contrast, the poor continue to struggle because they have little say in what goes on around them due to their low status in society. However, God does not state that riches are a blessing,

The rich man’s wealth is his strong city; (while) the destruction of the poor is their poverty (Prov. 10:15; Ed. note in parenthesis).

The final supposed contradictory scripture is speaking about a desire for balance when it comes to physical goods. The writer does not want to live in either extreme poverty nor in opulence,

Remove falsehood and lies far from me (Satan’s influence; cf. Jn. 8:44); give me neither poverty nor riches – feed me with the food You prescribe for me (cf. Mt. 4:4); <sup>9</sup>lest I be full and deny You (cf. Dt. 8:11-20), and say, ‘Who is the Lord?’ Or lest I be poor and steal, and profane the name of my God’ (Prov. 30:8-9; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Therefore, there are different subjects being discussed in the scriptures that are mentioned in the heading of this study, and none of them are a blanket statement by God that poverty is a blessing, or that riches are a blessing. Those who seek a balance in their lives will ask God to provide them with their needs and that neither opulence, or poverty will come to them.

This document is the collaborative work of individuals who believe God's truth should be given freely (Mt. 10:8; 1Cor. 2:12; 2Cor.11:7; Rom. 10:14-21) and the message of the one true God should be made available to all nations (Mt. 24:14) as a prerequisite to the return of Jesus Christ as King of kings (Mt. 17:10; 19:17; Mk. 9:11; Lk. 1:17; Rev. 19:11-16).

To protect the integrity of this document and prevent alteration and misapplication of its contents in whole or in part, this document is protected under copyright law.

Copyright: This document may be freely copied and distributed provided it is copied without alteration, addition, deletion, or charges, and includes the name of the publisher and this copyright. Quotations may be taken from this document provided the name of the publisher is cited.

All Rights Reserved

(Copyright ©1truth1law.com 2013)