

PROVERBS ON MONEY, PART 1 *IS WEALTH GOOD OR BAD?*

Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version.

Is it better to be poor or to be rich?

Being rich is better:

10:15 — A rich man's wealth is his strong city; the poverty of the poor is their ruin.

14:20 — The poor is disliked even by his neighbor, but the rich has many friends.

19:4 — Wealth brings many new friends, but a poor man is deserted by his friend.

22:7 — The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is the slave of the lender.

28:21 — To show partiality is not good, but for a piece of bread a man will do wrong.

But what looks good on the outside...

13:8 — The ransom of a man's life is his wealth, but a poor man hears no threat.

28:11 — A rich man is wise in his own eyes, but a poor man who has understanding will find him out.

• *ACCORDING TO THESE PROVERBS, IS IT BETTER TO BE POOR OR TO BE RICH? WHY?*

Wealth = A gift from God

3:9-10 — Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.

8:18 — *Lady Wisdom*: "Riches and honor are with me, enduring wealth and righteousness."

10:22 — The blessing of the Lord makes rich, and he adds no sorrow with it.

15:6 — In the house of the righteous there is much treasure, but trouble befalls the income of the wicked.

22:4 — The reward for humility and fear of the Lord is riches and honor and life.

• *LOOKING AT ALL THE ABOVE PROVERBS (both groups), HOW WOULD YOU ASSESS THIS CLAIM THAT WEALTH IS A GIFT FROM GOD? IS THIS CLAIM TRUE? IF SO, TO WHAT EXTENT?*

How much is wealth really worth?

1:8-19 — *What warning about wealth does this scene communicate to the wise?*

11:4 — Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death.

17:16 — Why should a fool have money in his hand to buy wisdom when he has no sense?

28:22 — A stingy man hastens after wealth and does not know that poverty will come upon him.

"Money never made a man happy yet, nor will it. There is nothing in its nature to produce happiness. The more a man has, the more he wants. Instead of its filling a vacuum, it makes one. If it satisfies one want, it doubles and triples that want another way." — Benjamin Franklin, quoted in Max Anders, *Proverbs*, Holman Old Testament Commentary, page 264

What is really most worthwhile?

11:16 — A gracious woman gets honor, and violent men get riches.

11:28 — Whoever trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will flourish like a green leaf.

15:15 — All the days of the afflicted are evil, but the cheerful of heart has a continual feast.

15:16 — Better is a little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble with it.

15:17 — Better is a dinner of herbs where love is than a fattened ox and hatred with it.

16:8 — Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues with injustice.

16:16 — How much better to get wisdom than gold! To get understanding is to be chosen rather than silver.

16:19 — It is better to be of a lowly spirit with the poor than to divide the spoil with the proud.

17:1 — Better is a dry morsel with quiet than a house full of feasting with strife.

18:10 — The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous man runs into it and is safe.

18:11 — A rich man's wealth is his strong city, and like a high wall in his imagination.

19:22 — What is desired in a man is steadfast love, and a poor man is better than a liar.

22:1 — A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favor is better than silver or gold.

28:6 — Better is a poor man who walks in his integrity than a rich man who is crooked in his ways.

- *LIST THE THINGS THAT THESE PROVERBS SAY ARE MORE DESIRABLE THAN WEALTH:*

Lessons from the relative value of wealth

13:7 — One pretends to be rich, yet has nothing; another pretends to be poor, yet has great wealth.

13:11 — Wealth gained hastily will dwindle, but whoever gathers little by little will increase it.

14:20 — The poor is disliked even by his neighbor, but the rich has many friends.

14:21 — Whoever despises his neighbor is a sinner, but blessed is he who is generous to the poor.

14:24 — The crown of the wise is their wealth, but the folly of fools brings folly.

22:2 — The rich and the poor meet together; the Lord is the Maker of them all.

23:4-5 — Do not toil to acquire wealth; be discerning enough to desist. When your eyes light on it, it is gone, for suddenly it sprouts wings, flying like an eagle toward heaven.

THE PRAYER OF THE RIGHTEOUS REGARDING WEALTH

30:7-9 — Two things I ask of you; deny them not to me before I die: Remove far from me falsehood and lying; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is needful for me, lest I be full and deny you and say, "Who is the Lord?" or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God.

- *What do you think is the proper attitude for God's people to have toward wealth?*

- *If you had more wealth, would it make you a better person or a more faithful follower of God? Why/Why not?*