



## Does God Hate the Rich?



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BICOOG Publication

## Does God Hate the Rich?

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***Does God only love poor people? Many feel that God hates people with wealth and power. The Bible says that money is the “root” of all evil. Does that mean we cannot possess’ money what so ever and enjoy the fruits of our labor? What does the Bible really say about wealth?***

Many big cities and towns have the slums. Up here in Toronto Canada many times especially in the downtown core you see many homeless people lying on the ground sleeping, sometimes in front of a huge beautiful building, where many rich people come out of. Why the big gap between rich and poor? Why the big gap between the first world and the third world? Is there a reason for it, and can the poor (people and countries) turn things around?

Jesus said, “For ye have the poor always with you;” (Matthew 26:11; Mark 14:7; John 12:8).

Moses wrote, “For the poor shall never cease out of the land:” (Deut 15:11), the reason?

Notice what God says here in Deuteronomy 15: 4-5: “*Save when there shall be no poor among you; for the LORD shall greatly bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance to possess it:*

*“Only if thou carefully hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all these commandments which I command thee this day.”* There will be no poor if people only will hearken, and do the commandments of God Almighty! God’s ways are the ways of life and prosperity (Deut 30:19). If all people would follow them, there would be no poor. Unfortunately people do not listen, therefore, the poor would never cease from the land.

### **Does God hate the Prosperous and Love only the Poor?**

Often times in political campaigns, you hear these politicians say, “tax the rich” so they can help the poor with welfare programs. They make the rich out to be the “bad guys.” Why? Because they are successful? Does God hate success? We know that the left wing socialists that have taken over the leadership of the western countries certainly do! They believe we should all be equal, like the Soviets tried to establish in the USSR which ended in a colossal failure. But this is simply not the case when it comes to the Bible and God.

The Bible reveals a clear distinction between the rich and poor. Not that God wants people to be poor, but not all humans will follow his laws and be industrious as others. One scripture says, “The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when *they* give an offering unto the LORD, to make an atonement for your souls.” (Ex 30:15). God knew in the nation of Israel that there would be poor and rich, but in that nation they all should be treated *fairly* under the law, as God says, “Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: *thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.*” (Lev 19:15). Yes treated fairly under the law, but there is still rich and poor. Some are more industrious than others. Some follow the law of God more to the letter than others. Some have more abilities than others. All have a chance to make something of themselves—that is the equal playing field. But who will be successful, and who will not? *That is up to the individual!*

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## **False Concepts about God and Money**

There are a lot of false ideas in circulation.

One is that God is angry at the man who becomes successful and prosperous, and wants all people to be poor. Nonsense!

God wants all of us to prosper and be successful! “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest *prosper* and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.” (3 John 1:2).

“Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

“But his delight *is* in the *law of the LORD*; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

“And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; *and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.*” (Psalm 1:1-3).

“And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a *prosperous man*; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.

“And his master saw that the LORD *was* with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to *prosper* in his hand.

“And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all *that* he had he put into his hand.” (Gen 39:2-4). Joseph served God and obeyed his laws. That is the key to prosperity!

The problem is many people seek the prosperity and *not* God. I see and hear about people many times praying to God that if they could win the lottery all their problems will be solved. But material wealth is not the key to happiness! People are missing the true formula Jesus gave to true happiness and peace *first*, and added to that as a result, the effect of the cause, is material prosperity.

## **“Seek” the Kingdom *first***

Jesus Christ gave us the way of true happiness and prosperity in our lives. He told his disciples, “But seek ye *first* the kingdom of God, and his *righteousness*; and all these things shall be *added* unto you.” (Matthew 6:33). The person asking God in prayer to win the lottery, is he or she asking to seek the kingdom of God and the law of God, or is he or she asking to seek the material prosperity? This is why their prayers go unanswered, they seek the wrong thing! Not to mention God says, “*Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished*: but he that gathereth by labour shall increase” (Prov 13:11). Is it any wonder why 70 per cent of most lottery winners go broke in the first year?

Very few people follow Jesus’ formula. Nearly everyone seeks first the material prosperity. And people become so engrossed in the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches-IF they succeed in acquiring them-they never seem able to find much time for seeking the Kingdom of God-to be governed by Gods laws. And most people consequently are in ignorance of the true formula for success, accomplishment, prosperity and the happy, joyous life!

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Most people seem to believe that HAPPINESS is something that comes from material possessions. Their chief concern in life, therefore, is to earn a better living-to seek dollars-to find happiness by GETTING material things.

In this chase for the elusive dollar, the large majority find the pursuit so difficult they become overcharged with the CARES of earning a living, trying to make ends meet, and this overwhelming majority never realize their goal. They remain either poor or in the worried middle-class, and the happiness they seek becomes as elusive as the dollars. They slave away their lives-empty, worried, unhappy lives.

But a FEW of these who seek first the material riches of this world and only a very few-do have the talents and qualities for material success and the accumulation of money. They pay the price, usually. They generally have ability, and they are the ones who study, prepare themselves, exercise vision, industry, perseverance, determination, and pay a heavy price for the material success they acquire.

There are two kinds of material prosperity-that acquired by those who seek first and only material assets-and those who seek first God's Way of life.

David noticed this and became envious of the rich, and God warned him, "For I was envious at the foolish, *when* I saw the prosperity of the wicked... Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish... Behold, these *are* the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase *in* riches... For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning... Until I went into the sanctuary of God; ***then understood I their end.***

"Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction.

"How are they *brought* into desolation, as in a moment! *they are utterly consumed with terrors.*" (Psalm 73 vv.3, 7, 12, 14, 17-19). David repented of this envy, because he saw the end of those who pursue wealth and material goods only.

In this world, a common pastime of Christians is to envy the rich-to grumble and complain and hate the rich, but God says, "Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.

"Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.

"For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth." (Psalm 37:7-9). Those that have gotten rich by evil ways, and are greedy, and trust in their riches and not God, will eventually fall, "For yet a little while, and the wicked *shall not be:*" (v.10).

Yes, what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? That kind of riches is false, soul damning, and soon left behind.

### **The Conflict between Rich and Poor**

But some of these worldly rich have been unjust-they and their big corporations have taken *advantage* of their position, and paid their laborers too little. Of course the laboring man, to get

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even then, organized and fought back with tactics of labor unionism and they have gained higher wages, employers then have simply raised prices, so that today's highest wages of all time actually purchase little more than the lower wages of the pre-unionism era. And the unions themselves have brought on additional evils to our society.

Thus employers themselves created the fertile field for labor leaders-leaders who have preached to laborers the gospel of laying down on the job, giving less work and demanding more pay, creating friction between employer and employee-who OUGHT to be partners! This has affected the overall economies of the western world greatly.

### **The Rich in this world**

The rich in this world that have gotten wealthy *legitimately*; they have actually put into practice what the Bible says about economic prosperity. This is called the "Protestant work ethic." The only difficulty is, they have defeated the very purpose they sought by setting their hearts solely on material gain. The Bible warns, "*Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom.*" (Prov 23:4). This is how men reason to accumulate as much material wealth as possible instead of seeking first GOD'S WAYS, finding the true SOURCE of happiness first, and then becoming materially prosperous in a manner that would INCREASE a happiness already found.

A few leaders, by practicing these laws of material prosperity, built large industries which employed large numbers of men. True, it was their determined PURPOSE-their study, industry, vision, planning, determination, perseverance, fighting their way to the top in spite of all obstacles, which finally put them on top of the economic heap. It was their industry and enterprise, hard work, and application, and ability of successful men and women *that a large portion of people are provided jobs-these industries created jobs for their employees which in turn benefits the nation and the economy.*

Today left leaning governments want to punish people for being successful! So if one goes to school, studies and makes something of him or herself, goes into business and sacrifices, and becomes rich in the process, the government wants to take your success and give it to those who don't want to work, and educate themselves, reward those who feel the world owes them a living. The Bible says, "...if any would not work, neither should he eat." (2 Thess 3:10).

### **How are we to be?**

What does the Bible say we ought to be? Poor? No! We ought to be industrious, successful, empire builders that will help the nation and the world.

Solomon said, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, *do it with thy might*; for *there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.*" (Eccl 9:10). Hard work needs to be done to be successful "...he that gathereth by labour shall increase." (Prov 13:11).

There is no room for laziness. Laziness leads to poverty, "How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?

"*Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep:*

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“So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.” (Prov 6:9-11).

Those that work hard will be successful and rule while those who are lazy will be under their submission, “The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute.” (Prov 12:24).

Education is also important to be successful, “A wise *man* will hear, and *will increase learning*; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels:

“The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge: *but fools despise wisdom and instruction.*” (Prov 1:5, 7). School teachers know who will be successful and who will not simply by observing students and the willingness or unwillingness to learn, or slack off.

“Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not.” (Prov 8:33). Education is available to all especially in the western nations, it’s the *individual* that has to decided what he or she will do with it.

Slothfulness is condemned all over the Bible and it causes poverty, “He becometh poor that dealeth *with* a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.” (Prov 10:4). This includes business and education.

Jesus also condemned slothfulness. In the parable of the talents the master had servants and gave 5, 2, and 1 talent to each, “to every man according to his several ability” (Matthew 25:15).

Notice Jesus said, “to every man according to his several ability.” The Pulpit Commentary writes, “The master apportioned his gifts in accordance with his *knowledge of the slaves’* capacity for business, and the probability of their rightly employing much or little capital. So God distributes his endowments, *not to all alike, but in such proportions as men are able to bear and to profit by.* The infinite variety in men’s dispositions, intellects, will, opportunities, position, and so on, are all taken into account, and modify and condition their responsibility.” (emphasis added). There wasn’t total equality, like the communists and the leftist try to put into our systems today. Education, work ethic and experience are what make a company/nation flourish.

So the one with 5 talents doubled it, so did the one with 2. The one with the one talent did nothing with it (vv. 16-18).

The ones who were industrious, educated and produced, Jesus said to them “Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant:” (v.21).

Notice what Jesus says to the one who did nothing, “*Thou wicked and slothful servant*, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:

“Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and *then* at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

“Take therefore the talent from him, and give *it* unto him which hath ten talents.” (Matthew 25:26-28). There is no room in the Kingdom of God for laziness. The God of the Bible is a God

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of work and production. Many people think of the afterlife as heavenly retirement, but the Bible says the exact opposite.

In conclusion putting Gods laws in motion in our lives will bless us automatically, and God said he in turn will bless us even more, "...because the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and *in all the works of thine hands, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice.*" (Deut 16:15).

With the blessings we receive because we follow God's ways and he blesses the works of our hands, we should, "Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:

"So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." (Prov 3:9, 10). Tithes and offerings go to God; in turn he will increase us even more (see Malachi 3:8-12).

With these riches Christians should not be greedy but to give to the people that need help and reward those that work for him if he or she owns a business, "*The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.*

*"He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him: but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it."* (Prov 11:25-26).

If you are an owner of a business and you treat your employees well, and reward them with pay and other privileges will they not praise you and want to work for you therefore get more production out of them? Word will get out, and you will have a lineup of people wanting to work for you! Remember "the fed make many, the starving make few, the dead make none!"

If you are a stingy boss, and work your employee's fingers to the bone, and give them little pay, and nothing else, terrible working conditions, who would want to work for you? How can your production improve when everyone hates you? One thing is for certain, it will be a revolving door of new employees coming in and old ones leaving, and production will wane, "He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him"

"But this *I say*, He which soweth *sparingly* shall reap also *sparingly*; and he which soweth *bountifully* shall reap also *bountifully*" (2 Corinth 9:6).

### **Shall we give to the Poor?**

There are several meanings to the word "poor" in the Bible. But in this booklet we are just focused on the economic poor.

The question comes up should we give to the poor? The answer is of course yes, but *how* shall we give? Many people believe we should just give money to a man on the street, or write a cheque (check) to a charity.

Sometimes these dumb politicians will stand up and say "we need to abolish poverty" that means you, me and every other tax payer has to give a lot more taxes so they can throw money at some

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committee or something to tackle poverty. All they know is to throw money at the problem, and not solve the problem.

For years the western governments have been giving billions of dollars to Africa, and still the African continent is the highest in the world when it comes to poverty. Dambisa Moyo a Zambian-born international economist and author wrote the book “Dead Aid” showing that just throwing money at the problem has not worked!

What will work? Notice what this source says, “Some might wonder how the economic prosperity of modern Japan, whose people are also given to hard work, thrift, and self-denial in order to prosper, can be explained, since that country has never had a strong Christian influence. Does the Japanese example invalidate the Christian work Ethic? The answer is no, because with the ascendancy of the Meiji philosophy, which began in the latter part of the nineteenth century, Japan intentionally adopted Western economic and industrial values and practices that were largely the product of the *Christian Work Ethic*. Japan did not have to adopt Christianity; it only needed to adopt the pertinent economic practices that are the product of its work ethic. As in many, other areas of life once the effects of a cause have become operative, then can be utilized part from the original cause.” (Under the Influence, by Alvin J. Schmidt, p.202, emphasis added). The Protestant or Christian work ethic is what raised Japan and other countries out of poverty.

In 1905 German sociologist Max Weber published his work, the Protestant Work Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, he noted that “business leaders and owners of capital, as well as higher grades of skilled labor, and even more the higher technically and commercially trained personnel of modern enterprises [were] overwhelmingly protestant” (p.35).

China in the past few decades have taken up the same practice of free markets and a skilled labor force. In the 70’s China was one of the poorest countries in the world, now it is second only to the United States when it comes to economic power.

The Bible says to “relieve” the poor, *not keep them in their poverty* which is what most people do when they just give money away to a charity. Think of it, with all the billions spent on charities, if this method worked there would be no more poverty, yet poverty is still here as God said, “the poor will be with you always.” Why? Because man is *not* doing it God’s way.

Notice “And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; *then thou shalt relieve him...*” (Lev 25:35).

Farmers were to leave the harvest on the borders of their land alone to relieve the poor, “And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not make clean riddance of the corners of thy field when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleaning of thy harvest: thou shalt leave them unto the poor, and to the stranger: I *am* the LORD your God.” (Lev 23:22). As in the case of Jesus, he was hungry and took the corn from the field to relieve him of his hunger, *not* that he was poor and had no money-but the circumstance that he was in, called for immediate relief and he took it (see Mark 2:23-27).

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We also should give generously to *relieve* the poor, “If there be among you a poor man of one of thy brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, *nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother*... For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, *Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land.*” (Deut 15:7, 11).

The poor should not be oppressed and the rich should pay his or her wages (see Deut 24:14-15; Luke 10:7).

The poor are not be charged interest, “If thou lend money to *any of my people that is poor* by thee, thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury.” (Ex 22:25). Many believe that interest is condemned in the Bible but it is not, just for the poor.

The poor person that puts down collateral for a loan he or she gets to keep the collateral in his or her possession at night when he or she sleeps (Ex 22:26, 27).

But then what? Do we keep giving money over and over to the same people so we create a welfare state? No! This way the person will continue to rely on people’s generosity and will never get out of his or her poverty just like nations do when it comes to Africa.

During that time of relief poor people must learn to be industrious, get educated so they can earn a living and be prosperous. Like the old saying, “You give a man a can of tuna, he had a meal, teach him *how* to fish, and he will never go hungry again.” This is how we should help the poor, relieve, and teach them to be successful. Now if they do not want to do it, then poverty will be their end, it’s their choice.

### **A Warning to the Rich**

Does God hate that people have money? No! “The rich and poor meet together: the LORD *is* the *maker* of them all.” (Prov 22:2)

“The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up” (1 Sam 2:7). This is done as a result of peoples actions. The laws of God will make you rich or poor, if you follow or break them (see Deut 28). We all have the opportunity; it’s what we do to achieve either status.

In fact God says that all the money is his, “The silver *is* mine, and the gold *is* mine, saith the LORD of hosts.” (Haggai 2:8).

It’s what rich people do with it, and the abusive of power that God hates! God warns the rich:

“Go to now, *ye rich men*, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon *you*.

“Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten.

“Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.

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“Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.

“Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.

“Ye have condemned *and* killed the just; *and* he doth not resist you.

“Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.” (James 5:1-7).

The rich though successful have taken advantage of their laborers and have become greedy.

Those tycoons of big business who have thus taken selfish and unfair advantage of their position have injured themselves, as well as their employees and their country. They have brought down on their own heads the evils of a labor unionism which preaches and practices friction instead of happy co-operation, thus reducing production and profits for all.

God says, “For the *love* of money is the root of all evil:” (1 Timothy 6:10). Not money itself, but the “LOVE” of it. Then it says as it should read, “a *root*” (*Vincent Word Studies*) “of all kinds of evil (*riza pantōn tōn kakōn*).” (Robertson’s Word Pictures). People and governments kill, steal, lie, and cheat for money-it is a root of all kinds of evil.

People who are successful and are rich must realize that the riches that they have they must not rely on, but to rely on God who is the source of all riches and can take them away if he chooses, “And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of *mine* hand hath gotten me this wealth. “But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for *it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth*, that he may establish his covenant which he swore unto thy fathers, as *it is this day*.” (Deut 8:17-18). God has given people the responsibility of accumulating vast amounts of riches, and that those riches are tools to be used for the good of mankind, not squandered as so many rich people do, on ten automobiles, 5 homes, and vast amounts of jewelry. Does a person really need those things? To buy yourself things that you need and to enjoy the fruits of your labor is one thing which the bible one can do (see Ecclesiastes 2:24; 3:13), but to over indulge in material things does not make any sense.

Jesus said, “For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required:” (Luke 12:28). With great power comes great responsibility, and many rich people are just wasting away their riches on themselves instead helping mankind. They just want get, instead of give. It’s like an ingrown toe nail, it’s very ugly, because it’s ingrown. Many people who think of themselves only are a very ugly site to behold.

Jesus told us to “seek” the kingdom of God “first,” and the riches were added as a result. When one seeks the kingdom first and its righteousness which is the law of God, and the riches follow, one knows who to serve only and that material wealth are just tools in ones hand to use for the glory of God. “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. *Ye cannot serve God and mammon*.” (Matthew 6:24). Seeking the kingdom first, you will not be a slave to the other. Unfortunately

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many have made themselves slaves to the wrong master, a master that will lead them to *destruction* and not life.

As David realized of those who “prosper in the world; they increase in riches” (Psalm 73:12), “*then* understood I their end.

“Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction.

“*How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors.*”

(Psalm 73:17-19). Let us rich or poor, pick the right master, the one that gives life, JESUS CHRIST AND THE FATHER!