

PROVERBS: *Riches & Poverty*

INTRODUCTION:

Problems associated with money and possessions have always been present and will continue as long as this world continues. The Proverbs give timeless advice on materialism, covetousness, poverty, deprivation, liberality and greed. Let us learn and apply the wisdom given on the subject.

I. CHARACTER OF RICHES

- A. Riches help avoid destructive circumstances that the poor cannot avoid (10:15).
- B. Riches are deceitful - cannot trust them (11:28, 18:11, 23:4-5).

II. RICHES ARE NOT EVERYTHING

- A. Unlike earthly riches, God's blessings will make you rich without accompanying sorrows (10:22, 15:16, 15:17).
- B. A gracious woman obtains the riches of honor (11:16, 11:22).
- C. You can be poor but truly wealthy (13:7, 13:8).
- D. Wisdom and understanding are more valuable than gold and silver (16:16, 20:15, 28:11).
- E. Poverty with integrity is better than riches with perverseness (16:8, 16:19, 28:6).
- F. A good reputation is more valuable than riches (22:1).

III. SHARING OUR EARTHLY POSSESSIONS

- A. Liberal giving tends to gain, while stingy withholding tends to want (11:24, 11:25, 18:16, 19:6).
- B. Withholding from others brings curse upon you from others (11:26, 14:28, 21:13).
- C. Pity on the poor brings you happiness (14:21, 19:17, 22:9, 28:27, 29:14).

IV. ATTITUDE TOWARD THE POOR AND RICH

- A. The poor are hated while the rich have friends (14:20, 18:23, 19:4, 19:7).
- B. Do not mock the poor (17:5).
- C. Rich and poor meet together in Jehovah (22:2, 29:13).
- D. Do not oppress the poor for you will be despoiled (22:16, 22:22-23, 28:3, 28:8).
- E. Promising words do not help the poor (19:7, 19:22).

V. COVETING RICHES

- A. Greed brings trouble and ruin (15:27, 20:21, 21:17, 28:20, 28:22, 28:25).
- B. A characteristic of the oppressor, not the righteous (28:16, 21:26, 29:7).
- C. Can cloud one's thinking as to reality (23:1-3, 23:6-8).

QUESTIONS:

1. Does God teach us that earthly riches have their *blessings*, and poverty their *curses* ?
2. What is faulty in trusting in riches as our city of strength?

3. Why is looking at riches like looking at something invisible?
4. What do blessings of God offer you that earthly possessions cannot deliver?
5. How can one be poor and have great wealth?
6. In 13:8, the poor hears no _____ . Why?
7. What type of wisdom is better than silver and gold?
8. In 22:1, what *two* things are more valuable than earthly riches?
9. Where in the New Testament is the principle of 11:25 found?
10. What *two* things are made by giving gifts?
11. If you refuse to hear the cry of the poor, what *two* things will happen?
12. Why should a prince see to the needs of the poor under his rule?
13. To whom are we lending when we have pity on the poor?
14. From what *two* unlikely sources does a poor man receive pain?
15. He who mocks the poor reproaches his _____ .
16. In 29:13, how does Jehovah "lighten" the eyes of both the poor and the oppressor?
17. Explain what a needy man is when he oppresses the feeble poor?
18. He that obtains funds through oppression, is gathering them for whom?

19. What kind of “brethren” and “friends” are those presented in 19:7?
20. In 19:22, why is a poor man better than a liar?
21. What all does one fail to see when he is greedy for gain?
22. Name several things which will come to one as a consequence of his greed?
23. How can a prince who lacks understanding be oppressive due to his greed (28:16)?

Thought Questions: How can we teach our children proper values about material things while our society bombards them with materialistic values?

What is the basic character flaw that leads one to greediness?

How can a greedy and materialistic person change to become benevolent?