

# *What the Bible Has To Say* *About Money*

From Genesis to Revelation the Bible talks about money. In Genesis we find Abraham described as being very rich, while later his ancestors are sent to Egypt to *buy* grain. From the earliest of times, precious metals such as silver, brass, and gold, became the common form of currency.

1. How is Abraham identified as being rich in Genesis 13:2?

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The Bible regards money and wealth as *amoral*, that is neither immoral or moral. Some people have the attitude that poverty is next to godliness, but this is not the Bible's position. It views money as a secondary issue compared to what it does to person. Because of its universal usage it has a lot to say about the way money is handled. Before coins were ever invented, the common way of doing business was bartering, or exchanging goods of equal value. Thus Abraham is described as having much cattle and silver and gold.

2. How does the tenth command, of the Ten Commandments, deal with wrong attitudes about money? (Ex. 20:17)

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3. Paul likens this sinful attitude to another of the Ten Commandments. According to Colossians 3:5, which one does he liken it to and why?

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4. Money tends to corrupt those who have abundance of it. Why would this be a fair statement to make based on Proverbs 11:18?

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5. The excessive lack of money also tends to corrupt. What types of corruption and sin does this lead to? (Proverbs 6:30)

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6. What did the writer of Proverbs 30 ask from the LORD about money and its affect on him? (verses 8-9)

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The Bible neither condemns or encourages either wealth or poverty. It does however have a lot to say about the heart condition and actions of both the poor and the rich. Therefore, poverty should not be seen as a mark of holiness or divine punishment, as riches should not be seen as a sign of God's blessing. Even some of the Bible writers puzzled over this (Job 12:6; Ps. 73:12; Jer. 5:28; 12:1; Hab. 1:5; Mal. 3:15). The religious culture Israel mainly combatted was *Baalism*, which promised its adherents blessing, protection and prosperity. Knowing that this was a false religion, many Israelites marvelled at how prosperous the Canaanites who practised Baalism were. This led to many either losing faith in Yahweh, as a God who couldn't compete, or vain attempts to claim that Yahweh could be manipulated just like the Baals (idols) to produce the same wealth, security and blessing by doing just what the Canaanites did, but instead dedicating it to Yahweh. This eventually led to God becoming furious with His people and divorcing them into exile. Israel had become more obsessed with what God could do and give, than with God Himself!

7. Do we face any such dangers like this? Discuss, then refer to Deuteronomy 8:10-18 and note its warning.

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8. Do you think God holds back wealth from some of His children? Why/why not?

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From divorce statistics we discover that a large percentage of breakdowns are attributed to financial problems. How many people have committed suicide for the same reason? How many suffer from low destructive self images because they feel they can't measure up financially? How many people have strayed into crime due to the same pressures of finance? Because money is such an important issue, the Bible has a lot of guidelines for its use, and proper handling of it. Over the next few studies we discuss various relevant aspects of its teaching.

*Amen.*