

Lesson 131 – The Effect of Wealth

1. Who is one of the wealthiest patriarchs in history? **Genesis 13:2**

EGW: (no comment)

2. Who was wealthy in the days of Ruth? **Ruth 2:1**

EGW: (no comment)

3. What nation saw wealth? **1 Samuel 2:32**

EGW: (no comment)

4. What can wealth be compared to? **Proverbs 10:15**

EGW: (no comment)

5. But who compares wealth to such? **Proverbs 18:11**

EGW: (no comment)

6. What can wealth draw out? **Proverbs 19:4**

EGW: (no comment)

7. What ought we not say about wealth gained? **Deuteronomy 8:17**

EGW: "The deceitfulness of riches." The love of riches has an infatuating, deceptive power. Too often those who possess worldly treasure forget that it is God who gives them power to get wealth. They say, "My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth." Deuteronomy 8:17. Their riches, instead of awakening gratitude to God, lead to the exaltation of self. They lose the sense of their dependence upon God and their obligation to their fellow men. Instead of regarding wealth as a talent to be employed for the glory of God and the uplifting of humanity, they look upon it as a means of serving themselves. Instead of developing in man the attributes of God, riches thus used are developing in him the attributes of Satan. The seed of the word is choked with thorns. {COL 52.2}

"And pleasures of this life." There is danger in amusement that is sought merely for self-gratification. All habits of indulgence that weaken the physical powers, that becloud the mind, or that benumb the spiritual perceptions, are "fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11. {COL 53.1}

"And the lusts of other things." These are not necessarily things sinful in themselves, but something that is made first instead of the kingdom of God. Whatever attracts the mind from God, whatever draws the affections away from Christ, is an enemy to the soul. {COL 53.2}

When the mind is youthful and vigorous and susceptible of rapid development, there is great temptation to be ambitious for self, to serve self. If worldly schemes are successful, there is an inclination to continue in a line that deadens conscience, and prevents a correct estimate as to what constitutes real excellence of character. When circumstances favor this development, growth will be seen in a direction prohibited by the word of God. {COL 53.3}

8. What ought we to say about wealth gained? **Deuteronomy 8:18**

EGW: The Lord brings His people by ways they know not, that He may test and prove them. This world is our place of proving. Here we decide our eternal destiny. God humbles His people that His will may be wrought out through them. Thus He dealt with the children of Israel as He led them through the wilderness. He told them what their fate would have been had He not laid a restraining hand upon that which would have hurt them. He speaks to them. Hear what He says: it is a revelation of the ministration of angels: "Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint; who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that He might humble thee, and that He might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end.... 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. And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish. As the nations which the Lord destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the Lord." {RH, October 8, 1901 par. 6}

9. The phrase "Tax the rich" is not a new thought, who is an example of implementing such? **2 Kings 15:20**

EGW: (no comment)

10. Who did God allow to ask for anything yet did not ask for wealth among other things? **2 Chronicles 1:11**

EGW: (no comment)

11. What was stated to show that this person was the wealthiest to ever live? **2 Chronicles 1:12**

EGW: (no comment)

12. Who are we not to be jealous of for their wealth, in general terms? **Ezra 9:10-12 [Answer in verse 11 is the description that is sought for.]**

EGW: (no comment)

13. Some people spend all their lives chasing wealth but what can happen in a mere moment? **Job 21:13**

EGW: (no comment)

14. Where does the wealth go then? **Psalms 49:10**

EGW: (no comment)

15. What did Job say should happen to him if he had prided himself in the wealth gained among other things? **Job 31:24-28 [Answer in verse 28.]**

EGW: (no comment)

16. What can all the wealth not accomplish? **Psalms 49:6-7**

EGW: Much is said concerning our duty to the neglected poor; should not some attention be given to the neglected rich? Many look upon this class as hopeless, and they do little to open the eyes of those, who, blinded and dazed by the glitter of earthly glory, have lost eternity out of their reckoning. Thousands of wealthy men have gone to their graves unwarned. But indifferent as they may appear, many among the rich are soul-burdened. "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase." He that says to fine gold, "Thou art my confidence," has "denied the God that is above." "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: (For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth forever)." Ecclesiastes 5:10; Job 31:24, 28; Psalm 49:7, 8. {MH 210.1}

Riches and worldly honor cannot satisfy the soul. Many among the rich are longing for some divine assurance, some spiritual hope. Many long for something that will bring to an end the monotony of their aimless lives. Many in official life feel their need of something which they have not. Few among them go to church; for they feel that they receive little benefit. The teaching they hear does not touch the heart. Shall we make no personal appeal to them? {MH 210.2}

Among the victims of want and sin are found those who were once in possession of wealth. Men of different vocations and different stations in life have been overcome by the pollutions of the world, by the use of strong drink, by the indulgence of lust, and have fallen under temptation. While these fallen ones demand pity and help, should not some attention be given to those who have not yet descended to these depths, but who are setting their feet in the same path? {MH 210.3}

17. What are the requirements to receive wealth from God along with enduring righteousness? **Psalms 112:1**

EGW: (no comment)

18. What can cause people to lose their wealth? **Proverbs 5:7-10 [Answer in verse 7.]**

EGW: (no comment)

19. What other way can wealth dwindle? **First half of Proverbs 13:11**

EGW: (no comment)

20. What helps increase wealth in a blessed way? **Second half of Proverbs 13:11**

EGW: (no comment)

21. Where is God going to eventually take us? **Psalms 66:12, John 14:2, Revelation 21:21**

EGW: "Thou hast caused men to ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water: but Thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place." Psalm 66:12. {MH 486.6}

We are prone to look to our fellow men for sympathy and uplifting, instead of looking to Jesus. In His mercy and faithfulness God often permits those in whom we place confidence to fail us, in order that we may learn the folly of trusting in man and making flesh our arm. Let us trust fully, humbly, unselfishly in God. He knows the sorrows that we feel to the depths of our being, but which we cannot express. When all things seem dark and unexplainable, remember the words of Christ, "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." John 13:7. {MH 486.7}

Study the history of Joseph and of Daniel. The Lord did not prevent the plottings of men who sought to do them harm; but He caused all these devices to work for good to His servants who amidst trial

and conflict preserved their faith and loyalty. {MH 487.1}

So long as we are in the world, we shall meet with adverse influences. There will be provocations to test the temper; and it is by meeting these in a right spirit that the Christian graces are developed. If Christ dwells in us, we shall be patient, kind, and forbearing, cheerful amid frets and irritations. Day by day and year by year we shall conquer self, and grow into a noble heroism. This is our allotted task; but it cannot be accomplished without help from Jesus, resolute decision, unwavering purpose, continual watchfulness, and unceasing prayer. Each one has a personal battle to fight. Not even God can make our characters noble or our lives useful, unless we become co-workers with Him. Those who decline the struggle lose the strength and joy of victory. {MH 487.2}

We need not keep our own record of trials and difficulties, griefs, and sorrows. All these things are written in the books, and heaven will take care of them. While we are counting up the disagreeable things, many things that are pleasant to reflect upon are passing from memory, such as the merciful kindness of God surrounding us every moment and the love over which angels marvel, that God gave His Son to die for us. If as workers for Christ you feel that you have had greater cares and trials than have fallen to the lot of others, remember that for you there is a peace unknown to those who shun these burdens. There is comfort and joy in the service of Christ. Let the world see that life with Him is no failure. {MH 487.3}