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The Poverty That Made Us Rich

8: 9

The poverty that made us rich DIG: In what ways did Yeshua become poor? In what ways has He made us rich? What does Messiah's eternity have to do with our eternity?

REFLECT: What about Yeshua's example motivates you to be generous with your money, time, and energy? What inhibits you? How are you rich spiritually? Impoverished?

Messiah did not make us materially rich, but gave us all the blessings of salvation.

In encouraging **the Corinthians** to bring **their** contribution to **the collection** for the poor believers in Jerusalem to a satisfactory **completion (8:6a)**, **Paul** has thus far appealed to the example of **the Macedonians (8:1-5)**, to **the Corinthians'** own promising beginning **(8:6b)**, to **their** desire for spiritual **excellence (8:7)**, and again to the eagerness of **the Macedonians (8:8b)**. Now **he** turns to the supreme example of **Yeshua Messiah**. The transition from **8:8** to **8:9**, expressed by the word **for**, is revealing because it suggests that **Paul** saw in **Messiah** the finest example of **One** who showed eagerness and generosity in **giving** as a demonstration of **His love (8:8a)**. If the sacrificial giving of **the Macedonians** did not stimulate **the Corinthians** to **give to the collection**, surely the example of **Messiah's** selflessness would. **For you know how generous our Lord Yeshua the Messiah was (8:9a).**¹⁸⁷



The poverty of Messiah (8:9b): Although **Yeshua** possessed all **the riches** of **ADONAI** from all eternity, yet for our **sakes He became poor**. Some have understood that statement as a reference to **Messiah's** financial **poverty** during **His** earthly life. However, **the Lord's** true impoverishment did not consist of the lowly circumstances in which He lived, but in the reality that **though He was in the form of God, He did not regard equality with God something to be possessed by force. On the contrary, He emptied Himself, in that He took on the form of a slave by becoming like human beings are (Phil 2:6-7)**. In other words, **the Lord Yeshua Messiah became poor** in **His** incarnation, when **He was born of woman (Gal 4:4)**, as a **human being with a nature like our own sinful one, but without sin (Romans 8:3)**, a descendant of **David according to the flesh (Romans 1:3)**, and made . . . for a little while **lower than the angels (Hebrews 2:7 and 9)**. **He** left heaven's **glory (John 17:5)** and laid aside the free use of **His** divine prerogatives.

Though **He** existed **in the form of God**, possessing all **the riches** of **deity, Yehsua emptied Himself** by become **poor** by **taking the form of a slave. He** suffered human weakness and limitations, becoming **hungry (Matthew 4:2, 21:18)**, **thirsty (John 4:7, 19:28)**, and **tired (Mark 4:38, John 4:6)**. In addition, **He** was **tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin (Hebrews 4:15)**. So completely did **Yeshua** identify with **His** people as **their** faithful **High Priest** (see the commentary on **Hebrews, to see link click [Ay](#) - Messiah's Qualifications as our Great High Priest**), that **He** humbled **Himself** by becoming **obedient to the point of death** on the cross. By doing so, **He** defeated the powers of hell, accomplished the work of redemption that **God the Father** had assigned to **Him**, and gave **His** people the priceless **riches** of salvation.

The riches of Messiah (8:9c): Though as **God, Yeshua** owns everything **in heaven and on earth (Exodus 19:5; Deuteronomy 10:14; Job 41:11; Psalm 24:1, 50:12; First Corinthians 10:26)**, **His** riches do not primarily consist of what is material. **The riches** in view here are those of **Messiah's** supernatural **glory, His** position as **God the Son**, and **His** eternal attributes. Our **eternal life** (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ [Ms](#) - The Eternal Security of the Believer**) is tied to **His** eternal life. If **He** is not **eternal, He** must have had a beginning, and would therefore be a created being. The fact that **Messiah** is **eternal** offers clear, powerful, and irrefutable proof of **His** **deity**, for it is an attribute that only **God** can possess.

Despite the false claims of heretics throughout history, the Bible teaches that **Yeshua Messiah** is not merely preexistent to human history, but **eternal. He** does not depend on anything outside of **Himself** for **His** existence, nor was there ever a time when **the Second**

Person of the Trinity came into being. **Yeshua** is not an emanation, a demigod, Michael the archangel, a spirit created by **God**, or an exalted man; **He is the Creator (John 1:3 and 10; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2)**, not a creature.

As **the Second Person of the Trinity**, **Yeshua** is as rich as **God the Father**. To the **Colossians Paul** wrote: **For in Yeshua all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form (Colossians 2:9)**, and **He is the radiance of the Sh'khinah glory and the exact representation of His nature (Hebrews 1:3)**. Arguments for **Messiah's eternity and deity** are inseparable. Since the Scriptures reveal **Him** to be **eternal**, and only **God** can be **eternal**; thus, **Yeshua** must be **God**. As a result, **He** owns the universe and everything in it, possessing all **power and authority (Matthew 28:18)**, and is to be **glorified and honored (John 5:23; Philippians 2:9-11)**.

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, Praise **You** for how great and deep **Your love** is! **You** willingly wrapped **Your** arms around the limitations of a human body (**Phil 2:5-11**). **You** focused on the eternal joy of bringing many into heaven by humbly enduring a shameful death, **for the joy set before You, You endured the cross, disregarding its shame (Heb 12:2b)**. **Your** loving arms welcome into **Your** family all who receive **You** as their **Lord and Savior**. **But whoever does receive You, those trusting in Your name, to these You gave the right to become Your children (John 1:12)**. It would have been fair if **You** made us **Your** servants, but **You** gave those who **love You** the privilege of being **Your** children.*

The gift of Messiah (8:9d): The purpose of **Messiah's** taking on human flesh was **so that by means of His poverty**, poor sinners **might become rich**. **He** did not make us materially **rich**, but gave us all the blessings of salvation - forgiveness, joy, peace, **eternal life**, light, and **glory**. **Peter** described those **riches** as **an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for us (First Peter 1:4)**. This was not the first time **Paul** had described the **riches** in **Messiah** to the **Corinthians**. In **First Corinthians 1:4-5a** he wrote: **I thank my God always for you because of God's love and kindness given to you through the Messiah Yeshua, in that you have been enriched by Him**.

The glorious truth that believers **have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Messiah (Ephesians 1:3)** through **His** self-emptying, self-sacrificial **love** should cause us to be grateful. More than that, however, it should motivate us to give freely, sacrificially, and **generously** to others. We must follow the example of our **Lord** who became **poor** to make others **rich**. How can we receive all **the riches** of **Messiah** and yet be unwilling to meet the needs of others (**James 2:15-16**)? **John** wrote: **If someone has**

worldly possessions and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how can he be loving God (First John 3:17). Some may view **Paul's** inclusion of this verse, with its profound theological truth, in the context of **giving** as odd. But that loses sight that theological truth does not exist in isolation from every life. The seemingly mundane issue of **the collection** was, in reality, connected to the central truth of our faith, namely, that **Yeshua Messiah's** voluntary **poverty** makes the spiritually destitute **rich**.¹⁸⁸