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## Generosity and Blessing

### 11: 23-27

**A proverb is a short and memorable saying designed to be our blueprint for living in the world that ADONAI has created. It is important to note that proverbs are not promises; they are generally true principles, all other things being equal.**

**The righteous desire only good, but what the wicked hope for brings wrath (11:23 CJB).** Earlier, **proverbs** have spoken of **the hopes of the godly (10:24)** as well as **the hope of the righteous (10:28)**. In the first, **the hopes of the godly will be granted** as are the horrors of **the wicked**. In the second, **the expectation of the wicked comes to nothing**, while **the hope of the righteous brings joy**. All three of these **proverbs** talk about the consequences of **righteous** and **wicked** behavior; consequences for **the righteous** are consistently positive and consequences for **the wicked**, as would be expected, are negative. In either case, this observation should lead the hearer to **godly** behavior.<sup>250</sup>



There is something about **wealth** and **finances** that makes them a window into the human heart. **Yeshua** said: **For where your wealth is, there your heart will be also (Matthew 6:21)**. At the core of human sinfulness is the desire to have more - more attention, more power, more pleasure, more security, more comfort, and more money. People will lie, steal, betray, and kill for these things. How odd then, is this

**proverb: Give freely and become wealthier; be stingy and lose everything (11:24 NLT)! People who are givers seem to have more than takers, who try to hoard the world's goods for themselves. There is no other explanation for this principle than God's unseen justice. That ADONAI has power over our financial well-being is a logical deduction from the fact that He is all-powerful. Furthermore, this truth is also clearly taught in the pages of the Bible.**

The story of **Job** is a powerful illustration of **YHVH's** control of the realm of financial success. **Job** was **wealthy** and a very **righteous man**, the **wealthiest in the east (Job 1:3)**. However, through the testing that **ADONAI** had **given to the Adversary**, he lost all of **his fortune** and **property** - even **his children**. Yet, following **Job's** repentance, we read this about **his** life: **When Job prayed for his friends, ADONAI restored his fortunes; ADONAI gave Job twice as much as he had before (Job 42:10).**

A further illustration of this principle can be seen in the book of **Haggai**. **Haggai** was a **prophet to the Israelites** who had returned from **exile in Babylon** (see **Ezra-Nehemiah, to see link click [Ay - Haggai: The Strait Talker](#)**). **In the second year of King Darius, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of ADONAI came through Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Jeshua son of Jehozadak (Ezra 3:2), kohen gadol: "Thus says ADONAI-Tzva'ot: 'This people say the time has not come - the time for the House of ADONAI to be rebuilt.' (Haggai 1:1-2)." The people of God had been procrastinating, unwilling to build, choosing to build their own luxury houses, while the Temple lay in ruins. For sixteen years they had ignored the LORD's house. But now He says, "Set your heart on your ways! You sowed much but brought in little. You eat but are never satisfied. You drink but not enough to get filled. You put on clothes but no one is warm. And whoever earns wages works for a bag full of holes" (Haggai 1:5-6).**

**ADONAI** can multiply our little or make our abundance come to nothing. **The generous person will prosper; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed (11:25 NLT)**. God takes the issue of generosity and our attitude toward the poor very seriously. When we **give** to the poor, we are lending to **the LORD**. **If you are kind to the poor, it's as if you lent (whatever you gave them) to God, and He will repay you for your good deed (19:17 Hebrew)**. This **proverb** bears a tremendous similarity to the saying of **Yeshua: Yes! I tell you that whenever you did these things for one of the least important of these**

**brothers of mine, you did them to Me!** But when we fail to help others, we are refusing to help **Messiah: I tell you the truth, when you refused to help the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were refusing to help Me (Matthew 25:40 and 45).**

A few words of balance are helpful to round out this principle. First, **God's** plan is to bless **the generous** with prosperity. But there are exceptions. **Generosity** is not a tool that we can use for financial gain. We ought to be **generous** out of love, not a desire to obtain **the LORD's blessing**. Second, **ADONAI gives** different levels and kinds of prosperity to different people. Your generosity may find a different reward than someone else's generosity does.<sup>251</sup> And third, we are most **generous** when we **give** sacrificially (see the commentary on **The Life of Christ Je - The Widow's Offering**).

**People curse the one who hoards grain, but they pray God's blessing on the one who is willing to sell (11:26 NIV).** As with the previous **two verses**, this **proverb** encourages **generosity**, or at least **giving** over **hoarding**. The principle again is that good benefits accrue to those who have the interests of the community in mind. However, it is not a matter of self-sacrifice since generosity leads to positive results for the one who practices it. The reality of this verse is provided by an agrarian example, though this does not mean that society as a whole is an agrarian rather than an urban one. In fact, it may show the latter since nonfarmers would stand to be harmed by the withholding of grain to drive up the prices. This verse does not state *why* **grain** is being withheld, but the idea of getting a higher price for a scarce commodity seems a reasonable possibility.

**Whoever seeks good finds favor, but evil comes to the one who searches for it (11:27 NIV).** This verse also refers to consequences, but no longer are they the consequences of a **generous** or **giving** person. Here it has to do with the object of one's actions. The objects are stated in general terms. **Good and evil** are undefined in this proverb, but since the book of **Proverbs** provides the context, **good** should be understood to entail **wisdom**, and **evil** those things that pertain to **folly** (see **Br - Lady Wisdom and Madam Folly**). The second part of **the proverb** repeats the truth that those who seek **evil**, will have **evil** rebound on themselves.<sup>252</sup>

*Dear heavenly **Father**, praise **You** for being so wonderful and **generous**! It is a joy to please **You** by being **generous** in **giving**. **Your** sacrificial love is a wonderful role model to inspire me to be **generous** like **You**. **Giving** is such a privilege! As*

**the Macedonians gave** even when **they** were poor – so may I follow **their** example and find joy in giving, out of the love for **You** in **their** hearts (**Second Corinthians 8:1c-5**). **Wisdom** says live with a focus on eternity and store up treasure in heaven, not in earthly saving accounts that will disappear because “you can’t take with you.” As **Yeshua** told the rich fool: **And I’ll say to myself, “O my soul, you have plenty of goods saved up for many years! So take it easy! Eat, drink, and be merry.” But God said to him, “You fool! Tonight your soul is being demanded back from you! And what you have prepared, whose will that be?” So it is with the one who stores up treasure for himself and is not rich in God” (Luke 12:19-21)**. Life on this earth will be over in a flash – along with any earthly **wealth** that has been stored up. What joy there will be for those who, like **the Macedonians**, who **gave** even out of **their** poverty – for their hearts were full of love for **You**. **They** will receive an **eternal reward (First Corinthians 3:14)**. In **Messiah Yeshua’s** holy **Name** and power of **His** resurrection. Amen