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But Woe To You Who Are Rich
Luke 6: 24-26

But woe to you who are rich DIG: How would you define each warning Luke gives here? How does this passage define the kingdom of God? Is being rich an evil thing? What is ironic about having the main focus of your life seeking self-satisfaction and the good life now? What does Yeshua warn about seeking an earthly reputation?

REFLECT: What kind of a woe would you add to counteract the values in the media that we see today? Who are you really trying to please? A rich friend? Your boss? A relative? An employee? Or God?

Those who attained true righteousness live in accordance with an absolute divine standard. **The Pharisees**, on the other hand, failed to live by the absolute standard of the Torah. For example, **they** did not recognize their need for repentance since **they** felt themselves to be fully righteous. **They** submitted only to **their** own authority. **They** did not exercise mercy to those who truly needed it. **They** were only concerned with the external elements of religion. **They** caused strife and disagreement, and were guilty of persecuting true believers. While happiness and blessedness characterized those who attained the kind of righteousness the Torah demanded, **woe to** those who failed. **Jesus** declared four **woes**.



1. But woe to you who are rich, for you have already received your comfort (6:24). Those who fail to gain true righteousness seek wealth because materialism is their focus. They don't' seek a relationship with **God**, they seek wealth. We need

to keep our tastes simple. **The Lord** has much to say about the godless rich in the Scripture. So **money**, in and of itself, is not the problem here. You can be **rich** and be a godly person. But, as Paul wrote to Timothy: **The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith they pierced themselves with many griefs (First Timothy 6:10).**

2. Woe to you who are well fed now, for you will go hungry (6:25a). Those who fail to gain true righteousness seek self-satisfaction. They demand that their own needs be met, not the needs of others. Mary had already announced this earlier **(Luke 1:53)**. This is an example of synecdoche in which a part of the judgment upon the well fed, namely hunger, serves as a metaphor for the whole of the judgment that will come upon them.[509]

3. Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep (6:25b). Those who fail to gain true righteousness seek the good life now, with no thought about tomorrow. The present temporary state of happiness, laughter and gluttony of the arrogant rich will one day end and will be followed by an eternal state of mourning and weeping. As they say, “You can’t take it with you.”

4. Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you, for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets (6:26). Those who fail to gain true righteousness seek an earthly reputation. They strive to please people, rather than pleasing **God**. When everyone praises someone, he or she best beware, for those prophets in the TaNaKh who received universal praise were in fact **false prophets (Is 30:9-11; Jer 5:31, 23:16-22; Mic 2:11)**.

In the end, all of these things will fail. They may attain these things in this life, but it will be temporary and they will also fail to attain them in **the Kingdom of God** (see my commentary on **Revelation, to see link click Fh – The Dispensation of the Messianic Kingdom**) and the Eternal State (see my commentary on **Revelation Fq – The Eternal State**). The Pharisees saw no need for righteousness beyond their own. They saw no need for repentance or submission. They were concerned with their external demands. Causing discord among fellow Jews, they persecuted them merely because they could. Excluding **God** from the calculation, they thought they were the ones in control.[510]

In 1915 Pastor William Barton started to publish a series of articles. Using the archaic language of an ancient storyteller, he wrote his parables under the pen name of Safed the Sage. And for the next fifteen years he shared the wisdom of

Safed and his enduring spouse Keturah. It was a genre he enjoyed. By the early 1920s, Safed was said to have a following of at least three million. Turning an ordinary event into an illustration of a spiritual truth was always a keynote of Barton's ministry.

There was a day when Keturah called unto me to come to Lunch. And I came in and sat down over against her.

And she said, Give thanks to God.

And I inquired of her, saying, What for?

And she asked of me, saying, Have you no faith?

And I said, I have faith, and that is very nearly all. For I see nothing that I might eat, except thee three and a half pounds of Honey.

And she said, I should think that either one of us might justify thee in giving thanks.

And I said, It is even so, and I will do it. For thou and the pound of Honey are about the Same Size and there are other qualities possessed in Common by the two of you.

And Keturah said, Be brief with thy nonsense, and ask God's blessing on the food. For though it be an act of faith, yet shall thy faith bear fruit if thou delay not until the residue of the luncheon burn.

So we bowed our heads, and we gave thanks unto God for each other, and for our Home, and for our Children and for our Friends, and for the Food that I had faith to believe was coming. Then went Keturah to the Kitchen, and she returned with a Wonderful Corn Cake.

Now the color of it was the color of Pure Gold refined in the fire. And the Odor of it was a Sweet Smell. And the appearance thereof was enough to make the mouth of someone with a bad stomach water.

And she cut the Golden Corn Cake, and gave unto me a Great Square of it, an Acre or less in Area. And I cut it in twain with a Knife, and laid the two halves upon my Plate, and spread it over with Butter, and then I laid honey upon the top.

And when I had eaten it all, then did I pass back my plate, and Keturah gave unto me another Acre of less. And that also I did eat. Now there was a time in our early married life when Keturah was wont to say, Take heed that thou eat not too much of food such as this. But she saith that no longer.

And I ate, until I desired no longer.

And I said, Keturah, there is less of the Honey, but thou art the same. And I said something further to her about the Honey and Herself, but that is not for Publication. Only this I thought, how good it is for a man to have Food and plenty of it, and to have it rich and sweet and wholesome, and to have a Home that is sweet and companionable, and to have an Appetite and a Job.

Now I have read that George Washington ate plentifully of Corn Cake and Honey; and I marvel not that he was great.

Beloved, see to it that thou keep thy tastes Simple and Normal, and that thou love thine own Home. For the age in which we live hath great need of these very elementary lessons in the science of Right Living.[511]