

# ONE TORAH FOR ALL

Zerubbabel ben Emunah

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## The Evil Eye

The Pursuit of Riches

***Mishle [Proverbs] 28:22***

***A man with an evil eye hastens after wealth, and does not know that want will come upon him.***

***Matithyah [Matthew] 6:19-24***

***19 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.***

***20 "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal;***

***21 for where your treasure is there will your heart be also.***

***22 "The lamp of the body is the eye; if therefore your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light.***

***23 "But if your eye is evil, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness!***

***24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve YHWH and mammon."***

There has been much speculation on what constitutes an "evil eye," from "giving someone the evil eye," to witchcraft or sorcery. Many preachers have attributed many evils to the "evil eye." However, the context of the above passage tells us a different story.

The context of what Yeshua is teaching His talmidim concerns treasure, or material possessions (wealth). The verses immediately before and after the verse in question (verse 23) are about pursuing (serving) money. Therefore, logic dictates that the "evil eye" has something to do with money. But what?

What does it mean to serve mammon or wealth? Let us first answer the easier question of, “What does it mean to serve YHWH?”

***Devarim [Deuteronomy] 8:19***

***And it shall be, if you shall forget YHWH your Elohim, and walk after other elohim (g-ds), and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that you shall surely perish.***

Please note in the above verse, the very close connection between serving and worshipping. If we serve something, we worship it. And, if we worship something we serve it. So if we are to worship YHWH, it simply means that we serve Him, doing what He wants rather than doing our own will.

Consider that we are to love YHWH with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength and to pursue righteousness. This is part of our service (worship) to YHWH. If a person is pursuing (seeking after) wealth, and this is what gives meaning to his life, then does that person not serve mammon? And if a person is serving mammon (wealth) then it follows that he cannot be serving YHWH, for no one can serve two masters.

Furthermore, if we let Scripture properly interpret Scripture (as we should), we can easily come to a definitive answer as to just exactly what the “evil eye” is. Consider this next passage.

***Mishle [Proverbs] 28:22***

***A man with an evil eye hastens after wealth, and does not know that want will come upon him.***

Notice here that the person who seeks after wealth has an “evil eye”. And just what kind of “want” can a rich man have, or that would overtake him?

Consider the rich man and Lazarus. In this present life the rich man had everything he needed or wanted. However, when it came to the next life (the olam haba), eternal life, there was a serious lack of what he needed. He was in want and did not even know it until it was too late and nothing could be done about it.

***Luqa [Luke] 16:19-31***

***19 “Now there was a certain rich man, and he was clothed in purple and fine linen, faring sumptuously every day;***

***20 and a certain beggar named Lazarus was laid at his gate, full of sores,***

***21 and desiring to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table; yea, even the dogs came and licked his sores.***

***22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and that he was carried away by the malakim [angels] into Avraham's bosom: and the rich man also died, and was buried.***

***23 And in Sheol he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and sees Avraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.***

**24 And he cried and said, 'Father Avraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am in anguish in this flame.'**

**25 But Avraham said, 'Son, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now here he is comforted, and you are in anguish.'**

**26 And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, that they that would pass from there to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from there to us.'**

**27 And he said, 'I pray you therefore, father, that you would send him to my father's house;**

**28 for I have five brothers; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.'**

**29 But Avraham says, 'They have Moshe and the prophets; let them hear them.'**

**30 And he said, 'Nay, father Avraham; but if one go to them from the dead, they will repent.'**

**31 And he said to him, 'If they hear not Moshe and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, if one rise from the dead.'"**

The rich man did not know what would come upon him until it was too late. He showed something that resembled love and concern after the fact; but it could not have been the genuine thing, because if it had been genuine, then he would have lived a better life in the here and now when it would have actually made a difference.

***Mishle [Proverbs] 23:4-7***

**4 Do not weary yourself to gain wealth, cease from your consideration of it.**

**5 When you set your eyes on it, it is gone. For wealth certainly makes itself wings, like an eagle that flies toward the heavens.**

**6 Do not eat the bread of a selfish man, or desire his delicacies;**

**7 For as he thinks within himself, so he is. He says to you, "Eat and drink!" But his heart is not with you.**

Do you sit around thinking about how to get rich? Do con artists easily suck you into a lot of "get rich quick" schemes? Then here is an admonition that we all need to take serious heed of, as it will help to restore shalom in one's life, lost due to pursuing the wrong things. Notice that this takes the form of a command. Note that it does not say that we are not to be wealthy, but rather that a person is not to seek after it as the only thing that they live for (i.e., the accumulation of wealth).

***Mishle [Proverbs] 28:27***

***He who gives to the poor will never want, but he who shuts his eyes will have many curses.***

The Torah commands us to take care of those who are unable to provide for their own needs. Here in this passage we see that if a person acts like there are no poor to take care of, the people will curse him. Do we really want people to curse us? If not, then we need to take care of the poor (widows, orphans, homeless, and generally those who have a need that they cannot meet).

**Mishle [Proverbs] 11:24-26**

**24 There is one who scatters, yet increases all the more, and there is one who withholds what is justly due, but it results only in want.**

**25 The generous man will be prosperous, and he who waters will himself be watered.**

**26 He who withholds grain, the people will curse him, but blessing will be on the head of him who sells it.**

Yeshua alluded to the concept found in verse 24a, in the parable found in Matityah 25:24 and Luke 19:21; while not an exact quote, the principle is the same. Do you want to increase what you have? Then do not hoard it all in one place (i.e., keep it to yourself). Rather, scatter it out (give to those in need).

The main item of interest for us in our present study is the contrast of the generous man to the man who is not generous; i.e., the man who has the “evil eye”. Once again we see that the stingy person is cursed and it is the generous person who will actually have the increase.

**Ecclesiastes 4:8**

**There is one alone, and there is not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet is there no end of all his labor; neither is his eye satisfied with riches; neither says he, “For whom do I labor.”**

We learn from this passage that the person who seeks after riches (wealth) will not be, nor can be, satisfied with that for which he seeks after: namely, riches.

**Devarim [Deuteronomy] 15:9**

**“Beware, lest there is a base thought in your heart, saying, ‘The seventh year, the year of remission, is near,’ and your eye is hostile toward your poor brother, and you give him nothing; then he may cry to YHWH against you, and it will be a sin in you.”**

Scripture is very clear here. If a person is stingy (hostile) towards his brother (fellow Yisraeli) then it is sin! The only remedy for sin is teshuvah (repentance), a turning away from doing wrong (breaking Torah) and a turning toward and doing right (keeping Torah). In the context of this passage, yea, in all the passages in this study, that means being generous.

**Matityah [Matthew] 20:15**

**Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is your eye evil, because I am good?**

Having an “evil eye” infects a person so completely that not only are they stingy with their own meager possessions, but the one who is stingy is also stingy with the possessions of others. A stingy person does not like to see others get blessed, or receive a blessing, nor for someone else to be generous with his own possessions; especially if they are not receiving at least as much of a blessing.

This is one of the truths that Yeshua is illustrating in the parable of the laborers (Mattithyahu 20:1-16). The above verse is taken from that parable. The landowner contracted with the workers early in the morning for a set wage. Later in the day the landowner found others who had found no one to work for, and when he told them to go work in his fields, they did. However, it was not for a set wage.

At the end of the day when they were all being paid (according to Torah, Vayyiqra/Leviticus 19:13) the landowner pays the last to go into the field first, and he pays them the same wage as he agreed to pay those he contracted with at the beginning of the day. But when he paid those he contracted with what he had contracted to pay them, they became angry. They did not like someone getting a blessing without them receiving a blessing as well (they failed to see the blessing of being able to work and getting paid for it). They were stingy with the possessions of others.

***Marqos [Mark] 7:20-23***

***20 And He said, "That which comes out of the man, that defiles the man.***

***21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,***

***22 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:***

***23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man."***

There are many things that can and do defile a man, and among those things is an "evil eye". Why does an "evil eye" defile a man? Because it is part of whom he is, for it comes forth from a person's heart. What is in a person's heart is what comes out of a person's heart. And as we have already seen, an "evil eye" is pursuing wealth and being stingy with it regardless of how much one has or doesn't have.

***Luqa [Luke] 11:34***

***"The lamp of your body is your eye; when your eye is clear, your whole body also is full of light; but when it is evil, your body also is full of darkness."***

Please take careful note of the comparison between "an evil eye" and "light" (Truth). There is a strong cause/effect relationship between being stingy and the lack of light (Truth) in a person's life. If a person wants more light (Torah Truth), then he must become a more generous person. The more generous a person is, the more light that YHWH will give into his heart!

***Romiym [Romans] 12:8***

***or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.***

When we give, we are to do it in such a way that it is not begrudging, or reluctant. Rather, we must give with great generosity, and cheerfulness.

***Romiym [Romans] 12:8 in Aramaic with Hebrew letters.***

וואית דמביאנא הו בבויאה ודיהב בפשיטותא ודקאם ברשא בחפיטותא ודמרחם בפציחותא

The word that we are interested in the above passage is the Aramaic word “baph-shee-tu-ta”. “Baphsheetuta” means “in simplicity,” or “in innocence,” or “in openhandedness.”

The root word of this word is the word “p’shat”. It is interesting to note that this is the same root word for Peshitta. Pashat is also a Hebrew word that deals with the simple or literal meaning of a passage of Scripture.

The meaning of the Aramaic word “p’shat” as listed in “ALR – A Compendious Syriac Dictionary”, is “to stretch out, extend, reach out, to reach out the hand to give, extend help to the needy, to offer oneself”, depending upon which form of the word is used.

What this teaches us is that the way that we are to give is to give of ourselves with open hands (without reservation) to those we see in need and with a heart that is full of the grace and joy of our Elohim.

***Qorintyah Bet [2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians] 9:5***

***Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, whereof you had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness.***

Again we see in this passage that when we give (not if we give) we are to do so with a right heart attitude.

In the USA there is an abundance of charlatan preachers who claim that if you give to their ministry, you will receive ten times as much as you give. While this concept appeals directly to the fleshly mindset, it has absolutely no basis in Scripture. When a person gives to get, he will find himself in want.

There are also those who claim that they are the only true ministry and that to give to anyone but them is to be giving to further an unclean ministry. Of course, who wants to do that? Who wouldn’t want to give to the one true ministry? Again, this is an appeal to the fleshly nature of man.

***Qorintyah Bet [2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians] 9:5-7***

***5 So I thought it necessary to urge the brethren that they would go on ahead to you and arrange beforehand your previously promised bountiful gift, that the same might be ready as a bountiful gift, and not affected by covetousness.***

***6 Now this I say, he who sows sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully shall also reap bountifully.***

***7 Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for Elohim loves a cheerful giver.***

In verse 7 of the above passage the word “cheerful” is once again the Aramaic word “p’shat”. Coupled with the concept of being a generous person as opposed to being a stingy person is the principle of sowing and reaping. Each person will reap a harvest of exactly what they have sown.

Once again in the above passage, notice that our giving should not be affected by covetousness (giving to get). This is what we spoke of earlier, the concept of some who teach you will get ten times more than you give. This is just plain wrong, let alone pure selfishness!

Please also note the intimation of keeping one's word (vow) in giving. If the words come out of our mouth that we are going to give something, then we should, in fact, give it. If we choose to break our word (break our vow) then it will be counted to us as sin.

Here is a question for each person to ponder: if we do not sow to build His Kingdom (now), how can we expect to reap His Kingdom in our lives (read eternal life)?

**1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 6:7-11**

**7 For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either.**

**8 And if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content.**

**9 But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction.**

**10 For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang.**

**11 But flee from these things, you man of YHWH; and pursue righteousness, piety, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness.**

Do you desire to be rich? If so back up and re-read the above passage again. Do you still want to be rich? This time repent and then read it again. These are serious words here and we need to take them with the utmost earnestness.

The short of it is this: stinginess causes a person to fall away from the true Faith. We are admonished to flee from this type of heart attitude and heart condition, and to pursue those things that are in accordance with Torah, namely: righteousness, piety, faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness.

It is your choice, for you cannot serve YHWH and money.

Now in the context of this study prayerfully consider the following passage of Scripture, keeping in mind that to be stingy (evil eye) is to be in want and to be generous is to have all your needs provided for.

**Matithyah 16:24-26**

**24 Then said Yeshua unto his disciples, "If any [man] will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.**

**25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.**

**26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"**

What does it mean to deny oneself? Does this not mean, at least in part, that a person is not to live only unto himself? The stingy person does not deny himself. Whatever he wants, he gives to himself. A person who tries to save himself and does not deny himself is a stingy person, a person with an evil eye. A stingy person will end up losing his life (he will have no eternal life).

Contrary to this, a generous person does not live just for himself, but will give preference to others. Thus, a generous person denies himself for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven and does not try to save his own life, but rather gives his life for the building of Yeshua's Kingdom. This is the point that so many believers fail to reckon with honestly.

So the question we have to answer today is this: "Will I be a person who is stingy or a person who is generous?" "Will I be a person excluded from the Kingdom or a citizen of the Kingdom?" It is our own personal choice and only our own personal choice. No one else can choose for us.

May YHWH enlighten us and give us wisdom beyond ourselves that we will choose with the wisdom of Heaven.

ABBA YHWH, please give us wisdom and understanding that we may choose to be generous with all the many bountiful gifts that You so freely place in our hands. But more than anything else, Heavenly Father, please cause us to be generous with ourselves. Please cause us to deny ourselves and become earnest Kingdom builders together for His glory and honor. Please cause us to be good and righteous stewards of all that You assign to us; in the name of Yeshua our Mashiach, Amein.

Amein and Amein!

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