

Is it Good to Be Rich?

"And Abram was very heavy with cattle, with silver, and with gold..."

Genesis Chapter 12

"And it came to pass when he came near to enter to Egypt that he said to Sarai, his wife, Behold, I know that you are a pretty woman, It shall come to pass when the Egyptians shall see you that they shall say 'this is his wife', they will desire you because of your beauty and they will kill me but you they will keep alive. **Therefore please say that you are my sister so that they will benefit me because of you,** and my life shall be spared because of you."

"And it came to pass that when Abram came to Egypt...the princes of Pharaoh also saw her and praised her for Pharaoh, **and the woman was taken to Pharaoh's palace. And he treated Abram well for her sake, and he had sheep and oxen and male asses and menservants and maidservants and female asses and camels.** "

"...And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him **and they sent him away and his wife and all that he had.**"

Genesis Chapter 13

1. And Abram came up from Egypt, he and his wife and all that was his, and Lot with him, to the south.
2. **And Abram was very heavy with cattle, with silver, and with gold.**

Kabbalah

Every object, force or phenomenon has a spark of holiness within it. This means that it has a point of divinity that constitutes its soul or its spiritual essence. It's this spark that causes the thing to exist and have a function within G-d's overall purpose of creation.

Tanya, ch 36 (paraphrased)

Every aspect of creation has a spiritual light which is its life force, as well as a vessel which holds this Divine light. This spiritual light can only be accessed if this physical item is used for G-dly purposes.

Tanchuma (Lech Lecha 9)

All events that transpired with our Patriarchs serve as a sign to their progeny.

Zohar (Lech Lecha)

Abraham's descent to Egypt led to the subsequent exile of the Jewish people there. His ascent from Egypt made possible the Jewish people's exodus and elevation from there. And just as Abraham left Egypt "heavily laden with livestock, silver and gold," the Jewish people would leave with great wealth.

Exodus 3:21-22

...When you leave, you will not go empty handed. Each woman shall request from her neighbor, silver and gold, objects and clothing. You shall put them on your sons and daughters and and you shall empty Egypt of all its wealth.

Likkutei Sichot (vol 3, pp 823); Arizal

Allegorically, this great wealth the Jews took with them when they left Egypt represented the power of holiness that the Egyptians had misused and thereby embedded within their depraved Egyptian civilization. It was necessary for the Jewish people to leave laden with this wealth, since that was part of their mission there—to extricate the spiritual good and elevate it by using it for a G-dly purpose.



Let's Review:



- Abraham tells Sara to say that she is his sister so that they will benefit him with physical prosperity. Pharaoh sends Abraham and Sara away laden with wealth.

- "All events that transpired with our Patriarchs serve as a sign to their progeny." The trailblazing of our fathers and mothers brings about the ensuing events to their progeny.

- Just as Abraham and Sara left Egypt with great wealth, through Sara's great merit, centuries later the Jewish people would leave their Egyptian exile with great wealth in the merit of the righteous women of that generation.

- Every object, force or phenomenon has a spark of holiness within it. Every individual has his own sparks scattered throughout the world that he is meant to use and elevate.

- Abraham's journey to Egypt –like his children's exile in Egypt--was intended for him to find the lost sparks of holiness that the Egyptians had misused. He, like his descendants, relied on the merits of his wife to achieve their mission of extricating the spiritual good.

Something to Think About:

- Each of us has a unique mission and our own parts of this physical reality that we are meant to elevate. Wealth or material prosperity represents those areas of our physical world that we can elevate. The next time you take out a coin or dollar bill (or debit card), consider: **How will you use what you have been blessed with for a good and G-dly purpose?**

Video: www.chabad.org/2084926