

THE SPIRITUAL CONNECTIONS 2ND ANNIVERSARY EDITION



FOR THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER 2004

*Whatever we do in life, take time out to reflect in the goodness of the Lord.  
May we never get too busy to thank Him daily for His Blessings. May we  
always recognize, His unending love and devotion for all His children.  
May His grace always abound !*

John 8:12 When Jesus spoke to the people again, He said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

## **FROM RICHES TO RAGS SPIRITUALLY.....By Dennis Palma**

When you here the phrase from riches to rags spiritually the first thing that must go through your mind is that something sounds wrong. For most of my life I have always heard the phrase from rags to riches, and nothing to do with anything spiritual. The saying from rags to riches always meant to me without the spiritual twist, that somebody who was doing real bad financially, was now doing real good financially. A sort of a dramatic turn of events. Some examples that come to my mind were the famous TV sitcoms years ago, the Jeffersons and the Clampids. They were stories of two struggling families financially, who caught a financial break and made it to the top of the ladder. Both stories, were against overwhelming odds.

Well when I say from riches to rags spiritually I mean just that. A person can have all the grace and blessings from the Lord and loose it real easy.

One of the most famous stories that comes to my mind, is the story about old king Solomon. With everything imaginable on earth at that time working in his favor, he eventually lost favor with the Lord. In the beginning of his reign, Solomon gratefully followed God. His Prayer of dedication for the temple in 1 Kings : 8 is one of the most majestic ever prayed. Yet by the end of his reign, Solomon had squandered away nearly every advantage....

In one generation, Solomon took Israel from a fledging kingdom dependent on God alone for bare survival to a self sufficient political power. But along the way he lost sight of the original vision to which God had called them. Sort of like saying to God, I got everything going great in my favor now who needs you. Ironically, by the time of Solomon's death, Israel resembled the Egypt they had escaped: an imperial state held in place by a bloated bureaucracy and slave labor, with an official state religion under the ruler's command. Success in the kingdom of this world had crowded out interest in the kingdom of God. The brief shinning vision of a covenant nation faded away, and God withdrew His sanction. After Solomon's death, Israel split into two and slid toward ruin.

A quotation from Oscar Wilde might provide the best epitaph for Solomon: " In this world there are only two tragedies, one is not getting what one wants, and the other is getting it." Solomon got whatever he wanted, especially when it came to symbols of power and status. Gradually he depended less on God and more on the props around him: the world's largest harem, a house twice the size of the temple, an army well stocked with chariots, a strong economy. Success may have eliminated any crisis of disappointment with God, but it also seemed to eliminate Solomon's desire

for God at all. The more he enjoyed the world's good gifts, the less he thought about the giver !

According to 1 Kings 11:1-13 King Solomon, however, loved many foreign women besides Pharaoh's daughter- Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians and Hittites. They were from nations about which the Lord had told the Israelites, "You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods." Nevertheless, Solomon held fast to them in love. He had seven hundred wives of royal birth and three hundred concubines, and his wives led him astray. As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father had been. He followed Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molech the detestable god of the Ammonites. So Solomon did evil in the eyes of the Lord. He did not follow the Lord completely, as David his father had done.

On the hill east of Jerusalem, Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the detestable god of Moab, and for Molech the detestable god of the Ammonites. He did the same for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and offered sacrifices to their gods.

The Lord became angry with Solomon because his heart had turned away from the Lord, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice. Although He had forbidden Solomon to follow other gods, Solomon did not keep the Lord's command. So the Lord said to Solomon, " Since this is your attitude and you have not kept my covenant and my decrees, which I commanded you, I will most certainly tear the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your subordinates . Nevertheless, for the sake of David your father, I will not tear the whole kingdom from him, but will give him one tribe for the sake of David my servant and for the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen.

This story from riches to rags spiritually, is such a sad but realistic fact of life. When we as finite humans become self sufficient financially, we all tend to lose a real sense of direction spiritually. No one is exempt from this human flaw. We can sit back and make all the excuses that come to mind regarding this issue ,but in essence, we are only fooling ourselves.

For God knows a lot better than we could possibly ever know, because He created all of us !

So my brothers and sisters in the Lord, try and take some time to reflect on all the blessings that the Lord has so gracefully bestowed upon you and your family this day, and give the Lord the thanks and praise He truly deserves.

Let us pray: Heavenly Father above, we thank You, praise You and bless You for all the blessings You give to all your children. May we never get

independent and self sufficient from You and all Your daily blessings. May we always remember the source of all the graces and blessings, that You give to all who believe in You.  
May we always take time daily to thank and praise You Father, for the good times we have, and the bad times we encounter also.  
May our hearts never grow cold toward You Father, instead focus on Your unending Grace always. I ask all this in Jesus name,.....Amen

---

## **HOPE FOR TOMORROW FOR THE MONTH OF SEPTEMBER**

### AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

Colossians 3:15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.....And be thankful.

Thankfulness isn't our usual response when something goes wrong. We may have a hundred good things for which to be thankful---but let one bad thing happen, and it's all we think about!

But the Bible says,"in everything give thanks" ( 1Thess.5:18). No matter what happens, we are to give thanks. Cultivate a spirit of thanksgiving in your life. Thank God for every blessing He gives you. Thank Him for Christ and what He has done for you. Even when things go wrong, thank Him that they aren't worse, and you are still in His hands.

Having an attitude of thankfulness in all of life's circumstances will help you react as old Matthew Henry did when he was mugged. He wrote in his diary, "Let me be thankful first because I was never robbed before; second, although they took my purse, they did not take my life; third, because although they took my all, it was not much; and fourth, because it was I who was robbed, not I who robbed."

I wonder if I could be that thankful! .....Billy Graham

---

(SPECIAL PRAYER)

AVOIDING PRESUMPTION

### *Renewal*

*I praise you Lord, that you are intimately acquainted with my ways and that You always love me and have my best interest at heart*

*Deuteronomy 10:12 O Lord my God, may I fear you, walk in all Your ways, love You, and serve You with all my heart and with all my soul.*

*Philippians 3:12 I have not been made perfect, but I press on to lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus also laid hold of me.*

Take a moment to offer this day to the lord, and ask him for the grace to grow in your knowledge and love for him.

---

### SPIRITUAL CLICHÉ FOR THE MONTH SEPTEMBER

Proverbs 20:15 Gold there is, and rubies in abundance, but the lips that speak knowledge are a rare jewel.

---

### SPECIAL PRAY INTENTIONS FOR THE SICK

Joe Monk Anne Stein Vince Moschella Mrs Davis Kay See Harry Neil  
Janet Neil Anthony Palma Jr. Debbie Danino John Sotile Sarah Jones  
Anne Palma Jennifer Myers Michael Monforto

---

ANY SPIRITUAL QUESTIONS, NEEDS, OR SPECIAL PRAYER  
REQUEST, FEEL FREE TO CALL THE MINISTRY OFFICE.

Office (609) 704-8547

Fax No. (609) 704-9408

E-Mail [ministry8246@comcast.net](mailto:ministry8246@comcast.net)

---

UNTIL NEXT MONTHS ADDITION

*May the Lord Our Savior Bless You and Your Family  
Always.*

---

---

---