

Sunday 14 June 2009

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Money (1)



Where your heart is

2009 has been a difficult year for many. What began as the credit crunch has led to a full blown recession. We are aware of that locally with Woolworth's closing and with Honda stopping production. Thankfully those employed on the shop floor at Honda are back at work. And there are signs that the economy may be in recovery. We do know however with all the money that the government have borrowed that the implication of this will impact not only the present but also the coming years.

Jesus did not tell us about his recession in the scriptures but he did provide inspired teaching for his disciples.

Rob Bell talks of Jewish disciples walking the dust of their Rabbi. Why don't we take a walk with Jesus and glean wisdom for such a time as this.

Martin Luther said "there are three conversions necessary: the conversion of the heart, mind and the purse"

In Matthew 6 Jesus teaches us

To pour out our your heart to God in prayer

- God already knows your needs 6.8
- He teaches us to pray that our needs will be met 6.11

That money is powerful:

The Light Side of Money

- Giving to the needy without courting the publicity. 6.2
- Being sacrificial out of love for God 6.18
- Invest in heaven

The Dark Side of Money

- Giving to the needy as a way of gaining attention. 6.2, 6.16-18
- Hoarding 6.19

To be clear what we focus upon.

In reality we all have vision that is things that are important to us. The eye provides a giveaway, what we look out for, what we focus our attention upon, this is indicative of what is most important.

It is whatever that may be, that becomes our treasure

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also 6.21.

Jesus encourages us/instructs us that as his disciples we are to seek more than anything else, more than wealth, or security etc God's Kingdom, which is about building a world God's way and helping the rule of God in the world to become more eminent.

It is about building upon God's values rather than those which are selfish and self seeking.

It is choosing to serve God rather than mammon which is more than money it becomes like a god and would love to control us.

The Bible has strong warnings about the danger of money and how its love is destructive.

Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Mat 6.24 KJV.

Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless Eccles 5.10

For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. 1 Tim 6.10

Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." Hebs 13.5

Why we can trust God

Lessons from the world of nature

The birds: *Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? 6.26*

God provides food for them.

The flowers: *And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labour or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? 6.28-30*

God clothes them.

Jesus is telling his disciples this, to show.

- God is able to provide
- God is generous in what he provides
- God is creative in what he provides – the flowers are beautiful.

Above all we do not need to pursue these things , to make them our number one desire. God knows our needs.

For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 6.32

So....

- At such times as these we need to be prudent but trusting.
- We need to be generous and not grabbing
- We need to recognise our true situation in the light of the world's need.
- Let's explore ways in which like God we can be a blessings
- Let's understand that money can bring light or darkness and our attitude to it and how we use it makes a difference

Small Group Study

1. Using a sheet of paper, ideally a big one, identify the difficulties that the present economic climate has brought and then identify any opportunities that it may give rise to.

2. How do you see Jesus' teaching in Matthew 6 is helpful?

3. Have you experienced the reality of these words in Matthew 6, if so share your experiences?




4. Money has both a light and a dark side. Examine this, consider how money impacts us. "Do we fear money? Do we hate money? Do we love money? Does money produce pride or shame in us?" (Richard Foster – Money Sex and Power)

Turn these thoughts and answers into prayer.

5. What opportunities does this provide for the Church to service the community of the Church and the community that is beyond it? Please would you forward any ideas in this area to Paul Graham our Mission Team Leader.

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PASSAGE RESULTS

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New International Version - UK		The Message
New Living Translation		King James Version
Contemporary English Version		<input type="button" value="Update"/>

Layout :  Rows  Columns

Matthew 6

Matthew 6
New International Version - UK (NIVUK)
View commentary related to this passage
Matthew 6
Giving to the Needy
¹ Be careful not to do your 'acts of righteousness' before men, to be

seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.

² So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honoured by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.

³ But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,

⁴ so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Prayer

⁵ And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by men. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.

⁶ But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

⁷ And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words.

⁸ Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

⁹ This, then, is how you should pray:

'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,

¹⁰ your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us today our daily bread.

¹² Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

¹³ And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'

¹⁴For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

¹⁵ But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Fasting

¹⁶ When you fast, do not look sombre as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full.

¹⁷ But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face,

¹⁸ so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Treasures in Heaven

¹⁹ Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.

²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

²² The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light.

²³ But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!

²⁴ No-one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

Do Not Worry

²⁵ Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?

²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?

²⁷ Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

²⁸ And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labour or spin.

²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these.

³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

³¹ So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'

³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

[New International Version - UK \(NIVUK\)](#)

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The Message (MSG)

[View commentary related to this passage](#)

Matthew 6

The World Is Not a Stage

¹ "Be especially careful when you are trying to be good so that you don't make a performance out of it. It might be good theater, but the God who made you won't be applauding. ²⁻⁴"When you do something for someone else, don't call attention to yourself. You've seen them in action, I'm sure—'playactors' I call them— treating prayer meeting and street corner alike as a stage, acting compassionate as long as someone is watching, playing to the crowds. They get applause, true, but that's all they get. When you help someone out, don't think about how it looks. Just do it—quietly and unobtrusively. That is the way your God, who conceived you in love, working behind the scenes, helps you out.

Pray with Simplicity

⁵"And when you come before God, don't turn that into a theatrical production either. All these people making a regular show out of their prayers, hoping for stardom! Do you think God sits in a box seat?

⁶"Here's what I want you to do: Find a quiet, secluded place so you won't be tempted to role-play before God. Just be there as simply and honestly as you can manage. The focus will shift from you to God, and you will begin to sense his grace.

⁷⁻¹³"The world is full of so-called prayer warriors who are prayer-ignorant. They're full of formulas and programs and advice, peddling techniques for getting what you want from God. Don't fall for that nonsense. This is your Father you are dealing with, and he knows better than you what you need. With a God like this loving you, you can pray very simply. Like this:

Our Father in heaven,
Reveal who you are.
Set the world right;
Do what's best— as above, so below.
Keep us alive with three square meals.
Keep us forgiven with you and forgiving others.
Keep us safe from ourselves and the Devil.

You're in charge!
You can do anything you want!
You're ablaze in beauty!
Yes. Yes. Yes.

¹⁴⁻¹⁵"In prayer there is a connection between what God does and what you do. You can't get forgiveness from God, for instance, without also forgiving others. If you refuse to do your part, you cut yourself off from God's part.

¹⁶⁻¹⁸"When you practice some appetite-denying discipline to better concentrate on God, don't make a production out of it. It might turn you into a small-time celebrity but it won't make you a saint. If you 'go into training' inwardly, act normal outwardly. Shampoo and comb your hair, brush your teeth, wash your face. God doesn't require attention-getting devices. He won't overlook what you are doing; he'll reward you well.

A Life of God-Worship

¹⁹⁻²¹"Don't hoard treasure down here where it gets eaten by moths and corroded by rust or—worse!—stolen by burglars. Stockpile treasure in heaven, where it's safe from moth and rust and burglars. It's obvious, isn't it? The place where your treasure is, is the place you will most want to be, and end up being.

²²⁻²³"Your eyes are windows into your body. If you open your eyes wide in wonder and belief, your body fills up with light. If you live squinty-eyed in greed and distrust, your body is a dank cellar. If you pull the blinds on your windows, what a dark life you will have!

²⁴"You can't worship two gods at once. Loving one god, you'll end up hating the other. Adoration of one feeds contempt for the other. You can't worship God and Money both.

²⁵⁻²⁶"If you decide for God, living a life of God-worship, it follows that you don't fuss about what's on the table at mealtimes or whether the clothes in your closet are in fashion. There is far more to your life than the food you put in your stomach, more to your outer appearance than the clothes you hang on your body. Look at the birds, free and unfettered, not tied down to a job description, careless in the care of God. And you count far more to him than birds.

²⁷⁻²⁹"Has anyone by fussing in front of the mirror ever gotten taller by

so much as an inch? All this time and money wasted on fashion—do you think it makes that much difference? Instead of looking at the fashions, walk out into the fields and look at the wildflowers. They never primp or shop, but have you ever seen color and design quite like it? The ten best-dressed men and women in the country look shabby alongside them.

³⁰⁻³³"If God gives such attention to the appearance of wildflowers—most of which are never even seen—don't you think he'll attend to you, take pride in you, do his best for you? What I'm trying to do here is to get you to relax, to not be so preoccupied with *getting*, so you can respond to God's *giving*. People who don't know God and the way he works fuss over these things, but you know both God and how he works. Steep your life in God-reality, God-initiative, God-provisions. Don't worry about missing out. You'll find all your everyday human concerns will be met.

³⁴"Give your entire attention to what God is doing right now, and don't get worked up about what may or may not happen tomorrow. God will help you deal with whatever hard things come up when the time comes.

[The Message \(MSG\)](#)

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New Living Translation (NLT)

[View commentary related to this passage](#)

Matthew 6

Teaching about Giving to the Needy

"Watch out! Don't do your good deeds publicly, to be admired by others, for you will lose the reward from your Father in heaven. ² When you give to someone in need, don't do as the hypocrites do—blowing trumpets in the synagogues and streets to call attention to their acts of charity! I tell you the truth, they have received all the reward they will ever get. ³ But when you give to someone in need, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. ⁴ Give your gifts in private, and your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

Teaching about Prayer and Fasting

⁵ "When you pray, don't be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. ⁶ But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

⁷ "When you pray, don't babble on and on as people of other religions do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. ⁸ Don't be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him! ⁹ Pray like this:

Our Father in heaven,
may your name be kept holy.

¹⁰ May your Kingdom come soon.
May your will be done on earth,
as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us today the food we need, ^[a]

¹² and forgive us our sins,
as we have forgiven those who sin against us.

¹³ And don't let us yield to temptation, ^[b]
but rescue us from the evil one. ^[c]

¹⁴ "If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.

¹⁶ "And when you fast, don't make it obvious, as the hypocrites do, for they try to look miserable and disheveled so people will admire them for their fasting. I tell you the truth, that is the only reward they will ever get. ¹⁷ But when you fast, comb your hair and wash your face. ¹⁸ Then no one will notice that you are fasting, except your Father, who knows what you do in private. And your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

Teaching about Money and Possessions

¹⁹ "Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.

²² "Your eye is a lamp that provides light for your body. When your

eye is good, your whole body is filled with light. ²³ But when your eye is bad, your whole body is filled with darkness. And if the light you think you have is actually darkness, how deep that darkness is!

²⁴ "No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

²⁵ "That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn't life more than food, and your body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to him than they are? ²⁷ Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?

²⁸ "And why worry about your clothing? Look at the lilies of the field and how they grow. They don't work or make their clothing, ²⁹ yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. ³⁰ And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith?

³¹ "So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?' ³² These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. ³³ Seek the Kingdom of God^[d] above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

³⁴ "So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today.

Footnotes:

- a. [Matthew 6:11](#) Or *Give us today our food for the day; or Give us today our food for tomorrow.*
- b. [Matthew 6:13](#) Or *And keep us from being tested.*
- c. [Matthew 6:13](#) Or *from evil.* Some manuscripts add *For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*
- d. [Matthew 6:33](#) Some manuscripts do not include *of God.*

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King James Version (KJV)

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Matthew 6

¹Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

²Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

³But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:

⁴That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.

⁵And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

⁶But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

⁷But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

⁸Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

⁹After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

¹⁰Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

¹¹Give us this day our daily bread.

¹²And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

¹³And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

¹⁴For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

¹⁵But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

¹⁶Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

¹⁷But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;

¹⁸That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

¹⁹Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

²⁰But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

²¹For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

²²The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

²³But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

²⁴No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

²⁵Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall

eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

²⁶Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

²⁷Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

²⁸And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

²⁹And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

³⁰Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

³¹Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

³²(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

³³But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

³⁴Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

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Matthew 6

Giving

¹When you do good deeds, don't try to show off. If you do, you won't

get a reward from your Father in heaven.

²When you give to the poor, don't blow a loud horn. That's what show-offs do in the meeting places and on the street corners, because they are always looking for praise. I can assure you that they already have their reward.

³When you give to the poor, don't let anyone know about it. ^[a] ⁴Then your gift will be given in secret. Your Father knows what is done in secret, and he will reward you.

Prayer

(Luke 11.2-4)

⁵When you pray, don't be like those show-offs who love to stand up and pray in the meeting places and on the street corners. They do this just to look good. I can assure you that they already have their reward.

⁶When you pray, go into a room alone and close the door. Pray to your Father in private. He knows what is done in private, and he will reward you.

⁷When you pray, don't talk on and on as people do who don't know God. They think God likes to hear long prayers. ⁸Don't be like them. Your Father knows what you need before you ask.

⁹You should pray like this:

Our Father in heaven,

help us to honor

your name.

¹⁰Come and set up

your kingdom,

so that everyone on earth

will obey you,

as you are obeyed

in heaven.

¹¹Give us our food for today. ^[b] ¹²Forgive us for doing wrong,
as we forgive others.

¹³Keep us from being tempted

and protect us from evil. ^[c] ¹⁴If you forgive others for the wrongs
they do to you, your Father in heaven will forgive you. ¹⁵But if you
don't forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Worshiping God by Going without Eating

¹⁶When you go without eating, ^[d] don't try to look gloomy as those
show-offs do when they go without eating. I can assure you that they
already have their reward. ¹⁷Instead, comb your hair and wash your
face. ¹⁸Then others won't know that you are going without eating. But
your Father sees what is done in private, and he will reward you.

Treasures in Heaven

(Luke 12.33,34)

¹⁹Don't store up treasures on earth! Moths and rust can destroy them,
and thieves can break in and steal them. ²⁰Instead, store up your
treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy them, and
thieves cannot break in and steal them. ²¹Your heart will always be
where your treasure is.

Light

(Luke 11.34-36)

²²Your eyes are like a window for your body. When they are good, you
have all the light you need. ²³But when your eyes are bad, everything
is dark. If the light inside you is dark, you surely are in the dark.

Money

(Luke 16.13)

²⁴You cannot be the slave of two masters! You will like one more than the other or be more loyal to one than the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

Worry

(Luke 12.22-31)

²⁵I tell you not to worry about your life. Don't worry about having something to eat, drink, or wear. Isn't life more than food or clothing?
²⁶Look at the birds in the sky! They don't plant or harvest. They don't even store grain in barns. Yet your Father in heaven takes care of them. Aren't you worth more than birds?

²⁷Can worry make you live longer? ^[e] ²⁸Why worry about clothes? Look how the wild flowers grow. They don't work hard to make their clothes. ²⁹But I tell you that Solomon with all his wealth ^[f] wasn't as well clothed as one of them. ³⁰God gives such beauty to everything that grows in the fields, even though it is here today and thrown into a fire tomorrow. He will surely do even more for you! Why do you have such little faith? ³¹Don't worry and ask yourselves, "Will we have anything to eat? Will we have anything to drink? Will we have any clothes to wear?" ³²Only people who don't know God are always worrying about such things. Your Father in heaven knows that you need all of these. ³³But more than anything else, put God's work first and do what he wants. Then the other things will be yours as well.

³⁴Don't worry about tomorrow. It will take care of itself. You have enough to worry about today.

Footnotes:

- a. [Matthew 6:3](#) *don't let anyone know about it*: The Greek text has,

- "Don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing."
- b. [Matthew 6:11](#) *our food for today*: Or "the food that we need" or "our food for the coming day."
 - c. [Matthew 6:13](#) *evil*: Or "the evil one," that is, the devil. Some manuscripts add, "The kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours forever. Amen."
 - d. [Matthew 6:16](#) *without eating*: See the note at 4.2.
 - e. [Matthew 6:27](#) *live longer*: Or "grow taller."
 - f. [Matthew 6:29](#) *Solomon with all his wealth*: The Jewish people thought that Solomon was the richest person who had ever lived.

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