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Wicked Money and the Great Endtime Wealth Transfer

By Wilfred Hahn



Many researchers today say that America is in the midst of the biggest wealth transfer ever. Some \$40 to \$100 trillion and more will change hands as the older generation passes off its wealth to the next generation in future years.

Similar such shifts, of course, apply everywhere. But there is yet one more great wealth transfer predicted to occur in the near future. According to some teachers, the Church with soon inherit the wealth of the wicked.

Reputedly, there is a Bible verse that supports this idea. Found in Proverbs 13:22, it reads, "A good man leaves an inheritance for his children's children, but a sinner's wealth is stored up for the righteous." It is mainly from this one single verse that the "wealth of the wicked" is conjured up for divine distribution to Christians living today. But really, what does this verse mean and to whom does it apply?

There seem to be a number of answers that have gained popular support in re-

cent years. Representing a growing view, says C. Peter Wagner, "[...] the body of Christ needs to come into alignment with God's declared purpose to release unprecedented amounts of wealth for the extension of His kingdom on earth."¹ Wagner is one of the key proponents of the view that the transfer of the "wealth of the wicked" is a premillennial event and is specifically meant for the Church ... more precisely, his own association of churches which is under his senior apostolic authority. Dr. Wagner, who was also a major impetus behind the "Church Growth Movement" and the "Third Wave," has much influence. Supposedly, this wealth transfer is a glorious development of the last days that enervates and honors the Church.



There are quite a number of loose interpretations of Proverbs 13:22. Applied to the Church, this concept is also often linked with the teaching that a massive, world-wide, last-day ingathering of souls will yet occur. It is also well known that prosperity gospel preachers like to hang their theology on this same Scripture verse found in Proverbs, though they apply it to the individual Christian.

Can any of these ideas be broadly supported in Scripture? We want to investigate.

Undocumented Transfers

Will the Church soon be showered with the wealth of the unrighteous, thus being able to fund the last, great global harvest of souls? Again quoting C. Peter Wagner, “I think the time is ripe for those of us who are apostles to begin to understand the crucial role we have in God’s plan to release the wealth of the wicked for the advance of the kingdom of God.”²

But what does the Bible say? Pursuing a historical-grammatical interpretation—in other words, interpreting the Bible as it reads—try as one might, one cannot find this view supported in the Bible.

Dealing first with the “wealth transfer” notion, indeed, we do find that there is a great wealth transfer prophesied in Scripture. However, it has nothing to do with the Church, but rather applies to Israel and the Millennial period. There are many more Scripture verses connecting this event to Israel, rather than the Church. Here are six:

1. “You will feed on the wealth of nations, and in their riches you will boast” (Isaiah 61:6).

2. “Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy; the wealth on the seas will be brought to you, to you the riches of the nations will come (Isaiah 60:5).

3. “I will extend peace to her like a river, and the wealth of nations like a flooding stream” (Isaiah 66:12).

4. “Rise and thresh, O Daughter of Zion, for I will give you horns of iron; I will give you hoofs of bronze and you will break to pieces many nations.” You will devote their ill-gotten gains to the LORD, their wealth to the Lord of all the earth (Micah 4.13).

5. “Your gates will always stand open, they will never be shut, day or night, so that men may bring you the wealth of the nations—their kings led in triumphal procession” (Isaiah 60:11).

6. “The wealth of all the surrounding nations will be collected—great quantities of gold and silver and clothing” (Zechariah 14:14).

There are additional indications of a great wealth transfer prophesied in the Old Testament. Their context refers to the same general time—late in the Tribulation and early Millennial period. For example, a prophecy applying to Tyre—this city being a prefigurement of the godless commercial systems that aligns with the Babylon the Great of Revelation 18—speaks of wealth being set aside for “those who live before the Lord.”

“At the end of seventy years, the LORD will deal with Tyre. She will return to her hire as a prostitute and will ply her trade with all the kingdoms on the face of the earth. Yet her profit and her earnings will be set apart for the LORD; they will not be stored up or hoarded. Her profits will go to those who live before the LORD, for abundant food and fine clothes” (Isaiah 23:17-18).

While this is not an exhaustive list of references, we have at least established broad Scriptural support for Israel being



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the recipient. Interestingly, there is not one verse we can find in the New Testament that even indirectly refers to a great endtime wealth transfer. Even the book of Revelation is silent on this topic, though it refers to the destruction of the wealth of Babylon the Great, which will "never be recovered" (Revelation 18:14). Assuredly, if such wealth were to be transferred to the Church, support for this concept would have been found in the New Testament. Instead, there we only find admonishments about the deceitfulness of wealth and how the faith of many will grow cold due to the cares of this life.

The Great Wealth Transfer Received

If there is any concept of the "wealth of the sinner" being transferred to the righteous, it clearly applies to the beginning Millennial period and not to any previous time. As such, Proverbs 13:22 is clearly taken out of context by the Third Wave group of movements. This verse is not a prophecy, but rather, like most of the wisdom literature of Proverbs, only points to general principles or ideals. In fact, in the very same chapter are found two additional statements about the wicked: "Misfortune pursues the sinner, but prosperity is the reward of the righteous" (verse 22); and, "The righteous eat to their hearts' content, but the stomach of the wicked goes hungry" (verse 25).

Again, neither of these can be prophecies. For one, there will be neither misfortune nor hunger in the Millennial period, nor will there be any wicked during that time to have such experiences. Secondly, as general physical principles, the two maxims in these verses are simply not observable upon earth during this present dispensation. Other Scriptures clearly point out that the wicked do enjoy their riches and that God indeed allows the rain to fall upon both the wicked and

righteous. (For example, see Job 21:7-9, Psalm 73:12.)

There are many other problems with the last-day wealth transfer notion applying to the Church. For example, it is claimed that there will yet be a last-day global harvest before the Lord returns, and that the Church will need great wealth to fund this objective as well as eradicating poverty in the world. Says Wagner, "In order to possess the gate of wealth to, among other things, develop plans to eradicate systemic poverty, we need to develop new structures of intercession to do the spiritual warfare necessary to transfer wealth."³

However, the Bible says directly otherwise. Clearly implying that there would be little faith upon earth when He returns, Christ asked the rhetorical question: "When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" (Luke 18:8). Sadly, whatever great harvests there might yet be, only a very small number of believers will remain at the time of Christ's return. Other Scriptures also underline this general "cold" spiritual condition of the last days.

In addition, with respect to the poor, Christ said that they would be with us always (Matthew 26:11), indicating that the fallen state of mankind was not going to be successfully transformed by the social initiatives of the Church or any other organization.

A final point to consider in our brief review is that if the Church must first wait for one great and final ingathering before being raptured (as the Third Wave prophets and so-called apostles such as Dr. Wagner prophesy), then the Biblical principle of imminency is obviated. However, nothing more is required to happen before the Rapture can occur. It is imminent. As such, it would be strange that the Holy Spirit himself would enable modern-



day prophets and apostles to foretell that one great ingathering is yet ahead. If that were so, the Rapture would need to wait and the Trinity would have internal contradictions of truth.

As it is, if there is any last-day ingathering prophesied in the Bible, perhaps this could occur within the Tribulation period, though this view is also not without its problems. Here may be involved the 144,000 that are sealed or the final Christian converts that may respond to the angel that “had the eternal gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth—to every nation, tribe, language and people (Revelation 14:6). However, the text gives us no indication as to how many people might respond, if any. Therefore we cannot prove that a great gathering would occur then either, though there surely will be believers during that time (See Revelation 20:4).

Respect for Scripture

So is there a great, last-day wealth transfer to the Church? Scripture easily and clearly settles this question. Yet, theologians who should have sufficient knowledge of what the Bible says⁴ instead prefer to trust their own intuitions and prophecies. This recent statement from Apostle Peter (also known as C. Peter Wagner) provides an example of such vanity, in which he appears to make his own decrees supersede Scripture. Spoken on the great reverential authority of the claimed office of an early New Testament apostle, he literally commands the earth's obedience. Not even the first Apostle Peter spoke with such licence. (One also wonders why the foundations of the New Jerusalem will be named after the original 12 apostles and not more? -See Revelation 21:14.)

“I hereby take the apostolic authority that I have been given by God “I decree

that vast amounts of wealth will be released supernaturally, even from godless and pagan sources. I decree that large numbers of God's chosen people will be empowered in fresh and creative ways to gain wealth according to Deuteronomy 8:18. New inventions will multiply. Disruptive technologies will change the life patterns of the whole human race. The earth will disgorge vast riches of hidden resources. These will be entrusted to God's agents. Profits will increase exponentially. It is spoken. So may it come to pass! Amen and amen!”⁵

Today, as all too frequently with other Third Wave Christian movements supposedly marked by “fresh moves of the Spirit,” new or revised theologies have been revealed on the strength of new prophecies uttered by their own prophets. The serious issue here is that these prophecies serve to revise what God originally said through his prophets and Scripture. Indeed, such revisions are not a new phenomenon, having been the mark of many if not all apostate movements or beliefs.

These prophecies reveal a lack of reverence and respect for what God has said. Consider that Christ himself never once claimed to correct or revise any “jot or tittle” of the Scripture and the Prophets. Jesus, though he was God, could not and did not have the temerity to revise and improve upon the testimony of the prophets. Yet, such conceit and disrespect of Scripture is legion amongst all revisionists. Doing so, they “reject authority and slander celestial beings” (Jude 1:8). This was true of Mohammed (who claimed his mission was to revise and correct the previous prophets, including Christ) and to-



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day of many claimed Christian denominations from Roman Catholicism (namely, its Magisterium) to a growing number of Protestant sects.

Thoughts to Ponder

The Bible does prophesy a major end-time wealth transfer. It is not to the Church, but rather to Israel and the righteous of the Millennial Kingdom. Yet, some churches today do hanker after worldly power and have set their eyes upon monetary wealth. As America itself is in the midst of the largest wealth transfer in history, says the website of PhilanthroCorp, a fundraising consultancy, “Churches can capitalize on the opportunity presented by this huge wealth transfer by pursuing a strategic planned giving program.”⁶

In fact, the apostate church and its many daughters, shown as Mystery Babylon the Whore in Revelation 18, are well on their way to a full union with commercial Babylon of Revelation 18. The grand last-day ecumenical lie of serving both God and Mammon is far advanced. Since this is impossibility—“You cannot serve both God and Money.” (Matthew 6:24)—it is really a movement in which Mammon has robbed itself in the garb of religion and apparent “Christian godliness.”

The true Church of the last days, if anything, is more of a remnant than being resplendent with wealth. Revelation 3:8 says that the church of the “open door” is weak and feeble; far from being imbued with worldly power and wealth. It is this little Philadelphian band of believers, to which is promised, “Since you have kept my command to endure patiently, I will also keep you from the hour of trial that is going to come upon the whole world to test those who live on the earth” (Revelation 3:10). If the Third Wave movements are correct, one wonders why it is the rich

Laodicean church that is being reprimanded by Christ.

The Bible says, “The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (Revelation 19:10). We therefore must ask: Is the spirit behind these prophecies of great wealth and power coming to the Church the testimony of the Spirit of Jesus? (Acts 16:7, Philippians 1:19). Such riches would surely corrupt for wealth is deceitful (Matthew 13:22). Christ pointed to the importance of true riches for His followers and the Church, saying: “So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else’s property, who will give you property of your own?” (Luke 16:11-12)

Where should we look for wealth and power? “Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!” (Revelation 5:12) (MC)

ENDNOTES

- 1 C Peter Wagner, Personal invitation to this author to participate in an ad hoc “invitation-only” Apostolic Roundtable on Kingdom Wealth, in Colorado, October 2004. On file with The Mulberry Ministry.
- 2 C. Peter Wagner, Releasing Wealth in Apostolic Times. <<http://www.globalharvest.org/index.asp?action=wealth>> Accessed April 17, 2008.
- 3 C. Peter Wagner, Cindy Jacobs et al. January 10, 2008. <http://www.elijahlist.com/words/display_word/6056> Accessed April 18, 2008
- 4 Dr. Wagner was a long-time professor at Fuller Theological Seminary (28 years).
- 5 C. Peter Wagner, Global Link Volume 3, Issue 23, June 9, 2006. <http://www.globalharvest.org/global_link_95.htm> Accessed April 17, 2008.
- 6 PhilanthroCorp website: <<http://www.aboutplanned-giving.com/page.php>> Accessed April 25, 2008.