

TRUTH & RIGHT

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RICH TOWARDS GOD

I love music and have always been a big fan of Tom Petty. Growing up in northeastern Ohio, just a mere hour and some change away from the Rock And Roll Hall of Fame, classic rock stations heavily dominated the airwaves as I moved the dial along the radio. When Beth and I visited the Rock Hall in Cleveland soon after getting married, the Petty display is one of the first that visitors are met with upon entrance, with his signature Rickenbacker guitar and wrinkled up piece of notebook paper he wrote the lyrics to "Free Fallin" on up on the wall. Recently, since his death, several surviving family members have begun a

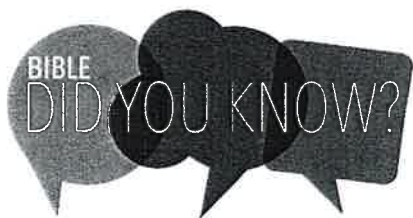
bitter legal battle over the rights to his estate. Jesus spoke on the vanity and foolishness of setting our heart on securing wealth, property and family estates which quickly change hands and eventually elude us when we ourselves experience death in this temporary life. "Someone in the crowd said to Him, 'Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.' But He said to him, 'Man, who appointed Me a judge or arbitrator over you?' Then He said to them, 'Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not even when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions.' And He told

them a parable, saying, 'The land of a rich man was very productive. And he began reasoning to himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?' Then he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.' But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?' So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God,'" (Luke 12:13-21). When you think about it, it's kind of ironic when family members fight over the wealth of relatives who died and weren't able to take it with them. You'd think they'd stop and think, "Ya know, even if I acquire all of this, I'm eventually going to die as well and all of this will be left over for someone else in the family to fight over." And yet it just

doesn't seem to register. Just like the rich man with productive land, we become so consumed with the managing and securing of our wealth and possessions that, sadly, we never make time to build a rich lasting spiritual legacy for the Lord which will last into eternity. According to the Lord, the best way to truly become rich toward God is to generously share what accumulation of wealth or possessions we have with others and gladly be willing to part with them. "Sell your possessions and give to charity; make yourselves money belts which do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also," (Luke 12:33-34). "Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to

share, storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed," (1 Timothy 6:17-19). "But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. Whoever hits you on the cheek, offer him the other also; and whoever takes away your coat, do not withhold your shirt from him either. Give to everyone who asks of you, and whoever takes away what is yours, do not demand it back. Treat others the same way you want them to treat you. If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners in order to receive back the same amount. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High;

for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful," (Luke 6:27-36). The rich man who was not rich towards God is still regretting in agony to this day that he focused so much of his heart and ambition towards the security and selfish enjoyment of all his wealth. "...and the rich man also died and was buried. In Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and saw Abraham far away and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried out and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame,'" (Luke 16:22-24). – Daniel Ruegg



"Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him."

Proverbs 29:20

People, Places, and Things of the **BIBLE**



Ketef Hinnom Scrolls

Many archaeology finds are named after the location in which they are found. The Ketef Hinnom scrolls are from Ketef Hinnom which is southwest of old Jerusalem, in Israel. More specifically they were located near the road that runs between Jerusalem and Bethlehem. They are possibly the oldest manuscripts currently known that recite what appears to be clear biblical verses.

They are often referred to as amulets as they were likely worn around the neck of whoever owned them. The idea behind an amulet is that some object on your body could ward off evil or danger. However, they are also still scrolls as they were sheets of silver rolled up. This idea is reinforced by the fact that the scripture that could be read are clear verses about the Lord preserving His people. The specific passages were part of the priestly blessing that Jewish priests would recite over the people. The same blessing is still common today at the end of many church services, such as the Lutherans.

24 "The Lord bless you and keep you;
25 The Lord make His face shine upon you,
And be gracious to you;
26 The Lord lift up His countenance upon you
And give you peace."

(Numbers 6:24-26)

The dating of the amulets are believed to be about 6th century BCE. Their survival is partly due to the material that was used to create them. The amulets were inscribed on silver which is not the most resilient metal but enough that it was able to survive longer than the average piece of parchment. These scrolls are relatively unknown, but they can be seen today in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.

