

The Spirit of Mammon

The biblical meaning of mammon (*mamōnas*) is treasure or riches that are opposed to God. Strong’s Concordance defines mammon as “what is trusted in.” If you trust in wealth and let money dictate your decisions, there might be a spirit of mammon in your life. Anyone can have a spirit of mammon, from billionaires to the poorest of the poor. It’s all about your heart posture and what you worship.

Mammon is only mentioned twice in the Bible, and both times it’s in the New Testament. The first is Matthew 6:24, and the second is in Luke 16:9-13, *“He who is faithful in what is least, is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least, is unjust also in much. Therefore, if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?”*

Greed has stopped many Christians from fulfilling God’s will for their life. As we work towards financial freedom, we must guard against all forms of greed (Luke 12:15). The goal of building wealth is not to hoard material things for ourselves. Instead, the idea is to yield ourselves as a vessel, a conduit, so that our resources flow through us to serve God’s plans and purposes.

Jesus put it plainly in Matthew 6:24 when he said, *“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”*

How can we make sure that the spirit of mammon never gets us off track? Let’s dive into what the Bible says about mammon and provide encouragement for how to break a spirit of mammon in your life. If we want to experience the true riches and power God offers us, we must break any hold mammon has over our lives. We can do this by putting our trust in God, not in material prosperity. I have heard it said, “Live to give.” It’s my desire to live by this idiom.

While the word mammon isn’t mentioned in the Old Testament, the spirit of it is. Before the Israelites entered the Promised Land, God gave a Word to Moses to encourage and warn them: *“But remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms His covenant, which He swore to your ancestors, as it is today.” Deuteronomy 8:18*

Throughout the Old Testament, Baal and Yahweh are pitted against each other. In the wilderness, the Israelites created an idol of Baal in the form of a golden calf (Exodus 32). Later, in a drought, the prophet Elijah challenges 450 prophets of Baal and proves that Yahweh is the one and only God. (1 Kings 18:20-40)

It never worked when people prayed to other gods to end their droughts or deliver them from the wilderness. It only prolonged their suffering. Trusting in God was and is the only way to receive true deliverance and prosperity.

Today, we fight the same demonic spirit that urged people to worship Baal. The enemy still sends spirits of greed and control to tempt people to stumble. So, we need to examine our hearts and ask ourselves if we’re trusting in any idols that promise us wealth and prosperity outside of God. That’s why Deuteronomy 8:18 is essential—remembering God as the source and recipient of our wealth. We must learn how to break a spirit of mammon.

How to Break a Spirit of Mammon

It took me years to break the spirit of mammon in my life. When I first built wealth, I did it entirely for the wrong reasons. I wanted comfort, freedom, and possessions. I was not concerned with how wealth could further God’s plans and purposes. Thankfully, the Holy Spirit (and my wife) got ahold of me. I saw how a spirit of mammon was corrupting my perspective. Now, I realize that God’s purpose for wealth is much better than anything I could imagine.

If you need some guidance on how to break a spirit of mammon, here are three biblical strategies:

1. Give generously

“The generous will prosper; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed.” Proverbs 11:25

Giving is a God-given strategy to eliminate greed from your life. A spirit of mammon wants to hoard resources and maintain control. When you give, you directly counteract that spirit. Giving is an action that builds trust between you and God. Through giving, we affirm that our money belongs to God. It’s a declaration that we will use our resources to partner with His work in the earth. If you’re not giving tithes and offerings already, start. Then, ask God how you can give above and beyond with your time, money, and skills. Remember, “Live to give.”

One caution to consider: Sometimes our giving can become corrupted with a “give to get” motive, which is greed in disguise. It’s a very subtle influence by the spirit of mammon, so check your heart for it.

2. Pray fervently

“Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you who belong to Christ Jesus. Do not stifle the Holy Spirit. Do not scoff at prophecies, but test everything that is said. Hold on to what is good. Stay away from every kind of evil.” 1 Thessalonians 5:17-22

Ultimately, God has a perfect, custom-made strategy for how to break a spirit of mammon in your life. As 1 Thessalonians 5:17 says, never stop praying.

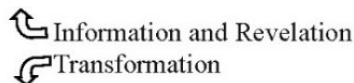
- Through prayer, bring your financial situation to God before you make decisions.
- Dream with God. Talk to Him about why you want to build wealth. Read the Bible and listen prayerfully for how God may want to infuse more Kingdom purpose into your plans. Then, ask Him to change your desires if needed.
- When you feel discontent and anxious for more, thank God for what you already have. Pray and ask Him to show you His perspective—it’s always one of abundance, not lack. Having and maintaining a deep sense of contentment and gratitude are crucial.

3. Surrender completely

“For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?” Matthew 16:25-26

As Christians, surrender is a continual process. We must choose to follow God’s plans and purposes every single day. You can tell it’s time to surrender when you’re holding your plans and timeline too tightly. When the real estate you want to buy, the investments you want to make, and the businesses you want to create, begin to take the place of God’s authority in your life, surrender is necessary. Preparation is good, but we must learn how to steward with one hand and surrender with the other.

Remember, one of the primary things that a spirit of mammon wants to do is control. We can’t have a spirit of control and follow the Spirit of God at the same time! So, daily surrender to God’s plan will keep greed at bay. —Ω



Heavenly Father, thank You for the wisdom of Your Word that leads me and guides me into all truth. Your Word says that it’s Your truth that sets me free, so I declare Your Word over me and receive Your freedom concerning greed, selfishness and control—I declare freedom from all manifestations of the spirit of mammon in my life. I worship You and You alone; therefore, I declare my trust in You for my every need, and dedicate myself as a good steward of Your resources entrusted to me. LORD, help me be a vessel of honor so that all the resources You give me flow through me for Your plans and purposes, recognizing that all my money belongs to You. Help me learn how to give generously so I can refresh others and be refreshed according to Your Word in Proverbs 11:25. Help me know what it means to “Live to give.” I praise You and ask these petitions in Jesus’ name. Amen.