

# Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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## Will Powerball History Repeat?

(Jerry Fite)

The biggest jackpot winner in North American history has come forth claiming her millions. Mavis Wanczyk, a resident of Massachusetts, had the winning number for this week’s \$758.7 million jackpot. Taking the lump sum, she will probably net about \$336 million after taxes.

The lottery calls it “winning,” but what happens to some “winners” is far from desirable. For example, David Edwards took home 27 million in August of 2001. The unemployed Kentuckian viewed his windfall as a blessing from God. He said, “God was listening.” He praised God publicly for blessing him with his newly found fortune. He spent \$1 million on expensive cars, a \$1.9 Lear Jet, and a \$1.6 million house. By the end of the first year, he spent \$12 million of the jackpot. By 2006, David had burned through all his money. He had nothing left. In 2013 Mr. Edwards died “alone and penniless” under hospice care. He owed thousands to family and friends.

There is a difference between what God allows to occur in our lives, and what He approves of in our lives. Sometimes, God allows man to receive

things which are contrary to what He desires. For example, Ahab was determined to take Ramoth-gilead. Four hundred prophets, knowing he wanted to conquer the city, said it was God’s will that he go, and take it. In reality, God allowed a lying spirit to entice King Ahab to fight against the city. It was not to be a blessing to Ahab, for the event led to his death (*I Kings 22:1-40*). When men do not love the truth, God allows men to “believe a lie” (*2 Thessalonians 2:11*).

The truth is that God views “covetousness” as “idolatry” (*Colossians 3:5*). David Edwards may have been in desperate straits, but he found seven dollars to gamble when the pot reached such lofty heights that he could not resist. People play lotteries out of greed. The desire to have more is especially strong when millions are dangling before the eyes. People may be coupled with desperation, but are fueled by covetousness.

God reminds us, “...they that are minded to be rich fall into a temptation and a snare and many foolish and hurtful lusts, such as drown men in destruction and perdition (*I Timothy 6:9*).

God not only condemns the greed that causes people to play the lottery, but warns against the means of gaining riches: “*Better is little, with righteousness, than great revenues with injustice*” (*Proverbs 16:8*). The lottery is legal, but that does not mean it is right. David Edwards in 2001, and now Mavis Wanczyk in 2017 became rich on the “losses” of who knows how many desperate people who were down and out.

Will the jackpot winnings of 2017 be a blessing to the Massachusetts’s woman? Such winnings in the 2001 jackpot were not a blessing to the Kentuckian man. God reminds us: “*Better is a little, with the fear of Jehovah, than great treasures and trouble therewith*” (*Proverbs 15:16*). Trouble? “What will I do with the money?” becomes an early thought to complicate one’s life. Look how many come out of the woodwork claiming kin, past friendship or offering investing advice. David Edwards painfully experienced the truth of God’s wisdom. Will Mavis Wanczyk fare any better? Time will tell, maybe sooner than you think. After foolishly allowing the world to see her face, she said, “I am going to go hide in my bed.” What? Has trouble already begun?