

Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

God blessed the Jews as long as they blessed him with their generous offerings. When they robbed him of tithes and offerings, he put a curse on them. The Apostle Paul informs us in the above scripture that God still works in the same way with Christians. If we give generously and with a cheerful heart to support his work, God will supply all our needs and increase our harvest. If we withhold from God he will withhold his blessings from us.

Christians should not give because they are forced to pay a pledge or a set charge levied by the church. Christians should give according to their income. Christians should give cheerfully. Christians should give because they love the Kingdom of God. Christians should give because they want to see the church grow.

Christians should give generously because they know it makes God happy. Christians should give generously because they know God will bless them and provide for them. Christians should give generously because it brings glory and honor to God.

God does not promise to make us wealthy. However, He does promise that if we bless him with generous offerings he will supply all our needs and enable us to continue giving generously.

GOD'S DISAPPOINTMENT IN US

A Christian who does not give generously, does not have faith in God. A Christian who does not give generously, does not have concern for God's work. A Christian who does not give generously, does not want to honor God. A Christian who does not give generously, will not be blessed by God.

Some will say, when I get a job, or when I have a better income then I will give generously. However, God expects you to show your faith in small things before he will bless you with bigger things. If you will not tithe or give generously from the little you have now, why will you do it if you have plenty? Jesus has said that he who is faithful in small things will be blessed with greater things. We must show our faithfulness to him now so he can know that we will be trustworthy for bigger things.

CONCLUSION

God gave the Jews a plan to support his spiritual work. The Jews gave a tithe which was given to the Levites so that the Levites could use their time in worship and spiritual teaching. The Jews gave sacrifices and offerings which were used in worship and special projects for God's work. When the Jews withheld their tithes and offerings, God withheld his blessings and even put a curse on them.

God has given Christians a similar plan. Everyone is to give according to his income. A tithe is a good place to start. Those who do spiritual work in the church are to be given financial support by the church they serve. This is a command from our Lord Jesus Christ. Local churches that do not give proper support to their spiritual leaders are disobeying Jesus and will suffer the results.

Everyone is to give generously. Those who give generously will be blessed by God. Those who give sparingly will not be blessed by God. If we have faith in God, we will give generously. Let us honor God by the way we give and by the way we support our spiritual leaders.

GOD'S PLAN FOR SUPPORTING HIS WORK

The church will be strongest when it follows God's will and God's plan. In the New Testament, we are given God's plan for his Church. We read that Jesus Christ is the head. We are told to choose elders and deacons to lead the church. We are taught to repent and to be baptized to receive forgiveness of our sins. We are told to preach the gospel to all the world and to train disciples. We are also given a plan for supporting this work.

Before we can understand God's plan for supporting his work, we must look at the plan God gave the Jews for supporting the temple and its worship. We find this plan in the laws that God gave to Moses in the Old Testament.

GOD'S PLAN FOR THE JEWS

First of all, God chose one of the 12 clans (tribes) of the Jews to be his special servants. God chose the clan of Levi to devote their time making sacrifices, conducting worship, giving spiritual instructions, and maintaining the place of worship.

Numbers 3:5-8

The Lord said to Moses, "Bring the tribe of Levi and present them to Aaron the priest to assist him. They are to perform duties for him and for the whole community at the Tent of Meeting [place of worship] by doing the work of the tabernacle. They are to take care of all the furnishings of the Tent of Meeting, fulfilling the obligations of the Israelites by doing the work of the tabernacle."

(Also read Numbers 1:50, 3:39, and 8:24-25)

When the Jews divided up the promised land, the clan of Levi did not get any farm land. They were to devote themselves to the service of God.