

PRACTICAL THINGS

Moreover he commanded the people who dwelt in Jerusalem to contribute support for the priest and the Levites, that they might devote themselves to the Law of the Lord...the children of Israel brought in abundance the firstfruits...and they brought in abundantly the tithe of everything...they laid in heaps...Then Hezekiah and the leaders came and saw the heaps...then Hezekiah questioned the priest and Levites concerning the heaps... Now Hezekiah commanded them to prepare rooms in the house of the Lord, and they prepared them.” 2 Chronicles 31:4-11

Hezekiah was a king who did everything well, pursuing excellence and complete obedience to the Lord. Once the worship had been restored along with the priests and Levites, Hezekiah knew that to sustain true worship these men would need provision. So he commanded the people to bring in their tithes and offerings to the house of the Lord. There was a great abundance which needed to be organized, stored, and distributed for the men of God to continue to do the work of God. Hezekiah found faithful leaders to distribute the offerings.

When people are restored to worshipping the One and Only true God do not forget to encourage them in giving to the work of the Lord that it may continue. Spiritual renewal is awesome as many turn back to the Lord, but with it there is a need to think practically. Those who are responsible to teach and preach and take care of God’s flock must be supported to do so properly. The spiritual condition of the people depends upon it. If the men of God are going to do the work of God well, they must be well provided for.

If the kingdom of God is going to expand kingdom giving must increase. If the whole of God’s people contribute then the burden does not fall on only a few. Everyone, no matter the financial status, can and should contribute to the work of God. Each one should bring the firstfruits of his labor thus honoring God and providing in a practical way for the needs of those serving in the ministry. The leaders should organize the gifts and work together in the distribution so that all things are done with integrity and fairly.

In the Old Testament the people brought the firstfruits of their crops to support the priests and Levites. How does this differ from giving to God what we have left over after spending our income on ourselves? Why is it important to give to God first?