

God Loves A Cheerful Giver Part 2

“20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.” (1 Corinthians 15:20 KJV)

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the real Firstborn and the true Firstfruit. The Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread were events that foreshadowed the death and the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ who gave His life and His blood for the redemption of our sins. He was the Firstborn of God the Father and the Firstborn among us, the children of God. ***“29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.” (Romans 8:29 KJV)*** Our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead on the very day that the firstfruits were ordered to be offered to show that He was the substance of the shadow. Let us read the instruction of God in pertains to this matter: ***“5 In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD'S passover. 6 And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. 7 In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. 8 But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. 9 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, 10 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: 11 And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. 12 And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf an he lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto the LORD. 13 And the meat offering thereof shall be two tenth deals of fine flour mingled with oil, an offering made by fire unto the LORD for a sweet savour: and the drink offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of an hin. 14 And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.” (Leviticus 23:5-14 KJV)*** Our Lord Jesus Christ was the Passover who died on the day that the Passover lamb was slaughtered on the fourteenth day of the first month. ***“5 In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD'S passover.” (Leviticus 23:5 KJV)*** ***“7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:” (1 Corinthians 5:7 KJV)*** Christ died on the sixth day of the week, the day after Christ's death was the Sabbath and the feast supposed to start on that Sabbath day, ***“6 And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. 7 In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.” (Leviticus 23:6-7 KJV)*** and the feast should last for seven days, ***“8 But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein.” (Leviticus 23:8 KJV)*** and they needed to offer the sheaf of the firstfruits that was offered on the Feast of Unleavened Bread after the Sabbath and that firstfruits typified the Lord Jesus. ***“10 Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto***

them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest:11 And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.” (Leviticus 23:10-11 KJV) The day after the Sabbath was the first day of the week when our Lord Jesus Christ was resurrected from the dead, and so that sheaf typified the Lord Jesus, and because of His resurrection on the first day of the week we celebrate and do our worship on the first day of the week, as the Lord's Day.

Notice also that with this firstfruits offering on the same day they offer other things unto God, a lamb for burnt offering with its meat and drink offerings, ***“12 And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf an he lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto the LORD. 13 And the meat offering thereof shall be two tenth deals of fine flour mingled with oil, an offering made by fire unto the LORD for a sweet savour: and the drink offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of an hin.” (Leviticus 23:12-13 KJV)***

“14 And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God: it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.” (Leviticus 23:14 KJV) The Israelites were not allowed to eat of their new corn till God's portion was offered to Him, so that God would bless the rest of their harvest of corn or barley. When the sheaf was reaped in the month of Abib (Nisan) the month of the Passover, the corn was beaten out and winnowed, and dried by the fire, and then ground in a mill, and an omer, or a tenth part of an ephah of the flour of it was taken which was around two litters, and oil and frankincense put upon it, a handful of which being put upon the altar by the priest, and the rest was the priest's, for his maintenance to eat from it; and with this pretty much agrees the account Josephus gives, who says, on the second day of unleavened bread, which is the sixteenth (day of Nisan), of the fruits they have reaped they take a part; for they do not touch them before, accounting it just to honour God first, from whom they receive the plenty of these things; and bring the firstfruits of the barley after this manner, having dried the handful of ears, and bruised them, and cleansed them from the bran, they bring to the altar a tenth part to God, and casting one handful of it on the altar, they leave the rest for the use of the priests; and from thence forward it is lawful to reap publicly and privately. And that before the handful of it was put upon the altar; which agitation or waving was, as Gersom says, towards the east; it was moved to and fro, backwards and forwards, upwards and downwards, to make an acknowledgment to the Lord of heaven and earth, that the fruits of the earth and the plentiful harvest were of him, and to give him the praise and glory of it. Paul said the following to the Romans: ***“16 For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.” (Romans 11:16 KJV)*** When he said, ***“For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy”, that means when the firstfruits are given God would bless the rest of the harvest and make it holy and a blessing to us.***

“9 Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: 10 So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.” (Proverbs 3:9-10 KJV) We are taught by this law to honor the Lord with our substance, and with the firstfruits of all our increase. The Israelites were the chosen people of God in the Old Testament who were guided by the Lord's instruction in every aspect of their lifestyle. **** If we claim to be the chosen people of God, we must begin with God and always live our lives with God – begin every day with Him, begin every meal with Him, begin every affair and business***

with Him. We should choose to honor God with our lives, with our substance, and with every firstfruits of our labor and increase. * Giving our firstfruits to God is an act of faithfulness and thanksgiving to God and honoring to him to all what he had given us; the salvation, the deliverance from our enemies and all the temporal blessings and the harvest we are receiving from him; then the whole of our harvest will be accepted by God for us to enjoy it, to eat it and to be bless with it.

“23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.” (1 Corinthians 15:23) Apostle Paul here was giving assurance to the church and to us today about the resurrection from the dead, ***that as Christ the firstfruits that God gave to us He resurrected first then we would follow after, everyone on his turn. That would sure take place but as Christ gave His life to God and resurrected from the dead, we too need to do the same to give our lives fully to God, to put God first and foremost as Jesus did in all the aspects of our lives in giving him our lives, our hearts, minds, will, our tithes, firstfruits, our alms, our vows, our various offerings and our everything as Jesus did, so we are assured of our resurrection from the dead.***

“22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, 23 To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.” (Hebrews 12:22-24 KJV) We are the Church of the Firstborn, Jesus Christ who is the first who rose from the dead, and we are the brothers of Jesus and our names are written in Heaven. ***We ought to follow our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church. Our firstfruits and life testimony should also be like that of Abel that even when we are dead it is still spoken about. We should give not only our tithes and firstfruits but our whole life to God. Abel not only gave his firstfruits to God but also his life. He was willing to suffer and died and withstood persecution in obedience to God. We ought to dedicate our whole life to live for God and also be willing to suffer for the glory of His name. If Abel obeyed and gave his life as firstfruits to God, how much more we need to obey Him today?***

The Israelites were redeemed by the blood of the lamb and henceforth observed giving their firstfruits to God. The meaning of the Passover in which we know that Christ is our Passover lamb is that the angel of death who passed over and killed the firstborns of Egypt of man and beast spared the Israelites and were commanded to give in exchange their firstborns of man and beast to God, and later on he replaced the firstborn of the Israelites with the Levites, priests and Levites, and asked the Israelites to give their firstfruits to the priests as their maintenance and their tithes to the Levites for their maintenance and the Israelites obeyed. If the Israelites obeyed God then how much more should we who are redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus! How much more should we observe giving our firstfruits, our whole life and all that God requires of us to support those who are in full time serving God!

“23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.” (Romans 8:23 KJV) We have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even the Holy Spirit that the Lord promised to give us. We give our firstfruits to God with the full understanding and by the enabling of the Holy Spirit, with rejoicing, in faith, and living the moment awaiting the future redemption of our bodies to gain a glorified body when we meet with the Lord in the clouds. As we practice giving our firstfruits, our barns will be filled with plenty, and our presses shall burst out with new wine. Thus we resolve to put God first and His Kingdom and righteousness, and surely we will lack no good thing: ***“33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Matthew 6:33 KJV)***

The firstfruits were given to the priests as his maintenance, to meet their material needs. * Now to those who do not teach this and who are against it, what is my reply to them that the death of Jesus on the cross cancelled the blood that needed to be shed of oxen, sheep and goats for the forgiveness of sins and that what the book of Hebrews dealt with, but the death of Jesus did not cancel the material needs of those who serve God full time, neither Christ Himself nor His apostles cancelled the giving of the tithes, firstfruits, various offerings and vows to God to be used to maintain the ministry. * The church today is not teaching giving as God ordained and that had brought much troubles to the people because their lack of giving to God.

Now to those who are settled and well to do, has work, saving, good income they are entitled to give their firstfruits to God in addition to their tithes, various offerings, vows and alms. * ***Now this you can and you would give if you had put God first in your life. Why you are not willing to give because you had put other priorities before God. You know how to go vacations and spend much money unnecessarily, you know how to eat in restaurants and spend on parties, you know how to send your children to colleges and the rest of your concerns, but if you fail to put God first in giving your firstfruits, then that is your failure with God. * The church failed God and is not teaching about giving the firstfruits because not putting God first but going along the people and is not disciplining the people of what they needed to give exactly to God, and such had caused the people more trouble because they failed God.***

I give my firstfruit as I give what is equal to one month income per a year. This is in addition to the giving of my tithes, various offerings, alms and my vows to God. I give my first fruit in this way: I divide whatever income I have into twelve portions and give one portion to the Lord; I put it in an envelope, write my name on it and specify the giving as firstfruits and I drop it in the collection basket. ***God had blessed me much as I continue to be faithful in my giving. And I need to teach you that not because that I will receive that, I don't need that, but I need to teach you to do my responsibility and free myself before God. I need to teach you giving the firstfruits, so as you obey God then he will bless you.***

“13 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?” (1 Corinthians 9:13 KJV) Here very clearly apostle Paul brought the Corinthians to the law of Moses, telling them that those who served God and did the service of the holy things of the temple, meaning the Levites and the priests they would live on the things of the temple that had been ordained for them, and those who worked and served on the altar meaning the altar of brass, the altar of the

burnt offering that would receive their parts from that service. Both the priests and the Levites were well maintained by the law of God that he gave to Moses. Don't tell me that Paul was speaking about the temple and the altar of the heathens, No! He was speaking about the temple of God that was in Jerusalem and the altar of the burnt offering that was in that temple. He spoke to them about the temple because it was not yet destroyed when Paul wrote this letter to them. From what Paul said to the Corinthians when he told them, **"Do ye not know"**, it means they were well aware and in good knowledge what were the privileges that the priests and the Levites were receiving through the law of God. Either they had studied the law of Moses since some of them were Jewish or Paul had taught them about it otherwise he would not tell them, **"Do ye not know"**, since he stayed with them eighteen months. Paul was not a worldly person who spent his time on the markets and making tours there. No! He spent the time to teach them the details of the law of God. The priests and the Levites were assigned in weekly courses to do the work of God in the temple. The priests were to offer the sacrifices on the altar of the burnt offering, and to work in the holy and the most holy places. The Levites were singers and playing on musical instruments and porters on the doors to protect the temple, and to manage the movement of the people and to examine them and exclude from them those who were unclean and to assist the priests in their work and prepare the showbread and the wood to keep the fire on the altar and the rest of the other things. So the courses of the priests and the Levites they would go and join the work in the temple and stay there for one week, not leaving the temple and God had allowed for them food from what was offered in the temple and maintenance for them and for their families. Now here we would put down what were the privileges of the priests and the Levites to receive from God through His people:

1. They were given forty eight cities for living and suburbs around these cities for their cattle and for their beasts and goods to keep: "1 And the LORD spake unto Moses in the plains of Moab by Jordan near Jericho, saying, 2 Command the children of Israel, that they give unto the Levites of the inheritance of their possession cities to dwell in; and ye shall give also unto the Levites suburbs for the cities round about them. 3 And the cities shall they have to dwell in; and the suburbs of them shall be for their cattle, and for their goods, and for all their beasts. 4 And the suburbs of the cities, which ye shall give unto the Levites, shall reach from the wall of the city and outward a thousand cubits round about. 5 And ye shall measure from without the city on the east side two thousand cubits, and on the south side two thousand cubits, and on the west side two thousand cubits, and on the north side two thousand cubits; and the city shall be in the midst: this shall be to them the suburbs of the cities. 6 And among the cities which ye shall give unto the Levites there shall be six cities for refuge, which ye shall appoint for the manslayer, that he may flee thither: and to them ye shall add forty and two cities. 7 So all the cities which ye shall give to the Levites shall be forty and eight cities: them shall ye give with their suburbs. 8 And the cities which ye shall give shall be of the possession of the children of Israel: from them that have many ye shall give many; but from them that have few ye shall give few: every one shall give of his cities unto the Levites according to his inheritance which he inheriteth." (Numbers 35:1-8 KJV) After finishing their one week of service those priests and Levites they would go to their houses. How these houses were provided since they had no inheritance of land in the

land of Canaan? Or how God would provide for his full time ministers and workers in the New Testament church? Before they entered the promised land God put the guidelines how to provide for the living accommodation for his full time workers who would serve at his sanctuary. He provided them cities and houses to live in, so here their accommodation was provided well for them, and they had suburbs for their cattle to keep and for other things they wanted to store. These cities were belonged to other tribes but were allocated for them to live in them. They had no land to inherit so cities and suburbs were allocated to them to use for their living and for their cattle and beasts and for their goods to keep there. **Those were similar to those who are full time ministers and workers who are set aside by God to do the works of God in our church today.** The suburbs were given to keep their cattle which were important not only for their food and clothes but were mandatory to maintain their worship. It was required to keep the daily morning and the evening burnt offerings on the altar of God, one in the morning and one in the evening on the six days of the week and two additional in the morning and in the evening on the Sabbath, So weekly 16 pieces of males' cattle, oxen or sheep, and if there is the new moon at the beginning of each month there was other cattle needed to be added, it may reach to 27 beasts in addition to all the meat offerings and the drink offerings that accompanies these sacrifices. **It supposed the people needed to bring that, but if not the priests and the Levites needed to manage it during their assigned week, and here the value of their own cattle, the value of their own resources and our own resources to maintain the ministry of God to let the fire burning on the altar of God that the ministries and the church of God to continue. So in addition of giving our tithes, firstfruits, alms and vows, the other various offerings are important to let the fire on the altar and the ministries of God to continue.** That might be why king Ahaz closed the temple of God because he did not want to give to God what ought to be given because he was giving to his high places, groves and altars he built and made outside the house of God to give to his idols. **When you stop your own idols, stop going to the high places, and start following the instruction we give you to refrain from spending on things not of God and not in the plan of God then that would be the time that you will be able to start to give and direct your resources toward God.**

You may ask why I am teaching you this and why you need to know these details. Because Paul said to the Corinthians, **"13 Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?" (1 Corinthians 9:13 KJV)** When he told them **"Do ye not know"**, it means they needed to know and indeed they knew that because some of them were Jewish and sure Paul taught them that since he stayed there in Corinth eighteen months, and he would not tell them that unless he taught them. **You may ask how we can give all such. When you are willing to follow God and give up your idols of education, immigration, travels and vacations, not doing your own will and plan, and follow instruction and willing to be disciplined then you can see you have much finances and have much finances to give what is due to God and pay all these different kinds of giving.**

The Levites were given six cities for refuge for the slayers to run there, to stand the judgment because the priests and the Levites were their judges to judge in that. They were the one to judge, discipline and punish who do wrong, and at the same time to receive from the same people their maintenance. **Not like now the people we admonish and discipline they will fight back as if we are doing that for our own benefits and not for them, and some they leave the church and withhold their resources in fighting against the church who discipline them. When**

you receive your discipline you need to continue to give what is due to you from tithes, firstfruits, various offerings, vows and alms.

All tribes needed to contribute to the cities of the priests and the Levites whether those with many or those with few cities. Those with many they needed to give many and those with few they needed to give few. ** It means no exception in the way that God is blessing you then you need to contribute to the need of the pastor and the church who is teaching you and guiding you with the Word of God. Here the accommodation is secured and if we speak in the language of today it means including the water, electricity, internet and the rest of the service needed. * Listen carefully to this: The death of Jesus on the cross had paid for our sins in full, but he did not pay for the fees of rent, the water, the electricity, the internet and the rest of the services needed. We need to pay for all these. From where? He gave us and everyone of us responsible to pay, including myself so the services and ministries of God to continue.*

My dear and beloved: Let us now come to God, let us thank Him for the promised resurrection that we received from Christ and His resurrection from the dead. Let us thank Christ for His death on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins. Let us thank God for all the resources and the blessings that He had given to us. Let us give thanks for all the good arrangements that He had prepare for us. Let us be willing to apply the teaching that we had received in this message about giving. Let us be willing to put God first in our lives, Let us be willing to give our lives, our time, our hearts, our resources and finances. Be willing to give up your idols and the worldly things that contradict the will of God and that are taking your finances. Be willing to accept discipline and correction and be willing to change your life style and your spending in order to put God first and start to please him. Let us pray ...

My Prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins, who was buried and rose from the dead on the third day to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your Word and the teaching I received from you in this message about giving and about putting you first in my life as Christ the firstfruits who resurrected from the dead and who had put you first. Lord thank you for all the resources that you had placed in my life to be used for your glory. Lord thank you for the teaching, the corrections, the rebukes and the admonishments we received in this message.

Confess and renounce all your sins. Confess and repent of your selfishness, your worldliness, your love for material things. Confess that you did not put God first and that you are careless and negligent about the things of God and his church. Confess and renounce your idols of education, traveling, immigration and your ambition that you spent much on these and neglected to give what is due to God. Repent of your bad stewardship, wrong spending and lack of saving. Repent of your non willingness to give your tithes, offerings and your firstfruits to God and to do your part and responsibility to the church and to the pastor who care for you. Repent of your lack of prayer and reading the Word of God. Repent of your bondage with the Media, News, games, and friends. Lord forgive me I repent of the following sins

Lord thank you for your Word that you sent me in this message. Lord I am willing to correct and amend my ways. Lord I commit myself to put you first in my life. I am willing to give up my idols _____, and willing to live in the style of life that you want me to live in. Lord I am willing to discipline myself and be good steward to my resources. Lord I am willing to give what is due to you from tithes, offerings and firstfruits and willing to support your works and the ministries and the workers of the church that you placed me in. Lord I give you my life, my heart, my whole body, my future, my plan, and to give up all wrong things, and to give all good things that you want me to give. Lord I place them all in your hand and in the hand of your church to be used for your glory.

Lord, thank you for my Brothers and Sisters who repented and had committed their lives to put you first and to serve you and to do the very things that you asked them to do and we had studied in this message. Lord help them to put their life in the right way, Lord guide them in the whole truth, and lead them to do your will. Lord give them wisdom, protect them and provide all their needs and help them to accomplish what they had committed themselves to do.

Lord we pray help us as a church to continue to implement your Word and your will in the life of each member, family, worker and minister of the church. Lord we are willing to put you first and not to compromise. Lord protect us, sustain us and continue to provide the resources we need. Lord give us wisdom to use the resources according to your will and the needs of the church and the workers and the ministries. Lord I pray for more people to get filled with the Holy Spirit to go and evangelize, make new disciples and train new workers to go and plant more Bible studies and congregations for the church. Lord I pray for more people to get water baptized and receive the Holy Spirit baptism. Lord fulfill the vision of the church, 'Multiplication in peace with implementing the whole will of God.' Lord prepare us for your coming that when you come we are ready to go with you. Lord bless us enlarge our territory let your hand be with us and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.

Dr. Ramiz Khalaf
The Church Overseer
Church of God
United Arab Emirates
Email: thebread1@gmail.com
Mobile Tel #: [00971551902647](tel:00971551902647)

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