

MONEY in the Life of the Believer

*(When quoting scriptures, from the Rotherham Emphasized Bible New Testament,
I will substitute the Hebrew word Yahshua for Jesus, Yahweh and Elohim for God and Anointed for Christ.)*

“The earth is Yahweh’s, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it” (Ps. 24:1). In the totality of our lives we do not own material things but only have the privilege of using them for our benefit and for the benefit of others. Our authority and power over material possessions will end when we return to dust (Gen 3:19). We are trustees of the resources Father has given us, not owners; “For who makes thee to differ? And what hast thou which thou didst not receive? But if thou didst even receive it why dost thou boast, as though thou has not received it” (I Cor. 4:7)? An excellent parable concerning trusteeship is Mark 12:1-3. “A man [Yahweh] planted a vineyard, and put round it a wall, and dug a wine-vat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen [us]; and left home. And he sent forth, unto the husbandmen [us] in the season a servant that from the husbandmen he might receive of the fruits of the vineyard [the earth].” A trustee is a person to whom another’s property or the management of another’s property is entrusted. We as trustees have been placed into a fiduciary relationship. As trustees we must look to the Trust Instrument, Yahweh’s Word, for instructions on how to manage our Father’s vineyard. Our homes, cars, money and retirement funds are Yahweh’s property. This aspect of Yahweh’s ownership is presented in I Chronicles chapter twenty-nine.

The heart of David is revealed by taking up an offering to build the Temple of Yahweh; “I have given for the house of my Elohim, above and beyond all that I have prepared for the holy house: three thousand talents of gold, of the gold of Ophir,—and seven thousand talents of refined silver, for overlaying the walls of the recesses. Of gold for the gold, and of silver for the silver, and for all manner of work in the hand of artificers,—Who then is ready to offer willingly, by filling his hand to-day, unto Yahweh? Then offered they willingly...And, every one with whom were found precious stones, gave to the treasure of the house of Yahweh,—unto the hand of Jehiel the Gershonite. So the people rejoiced because they willingly offered, for, with a perfect heart, offered they willingly unto Yahweh,—moreover also, David the king, rejoiced with great joy” (I Chron. 29:3-11). After the collection, David gives thanks unto Yahweh and states that what they have given to Yahweh came from His own hand; “And yet, who am, I, and who are my people, that we should be able to offer willingly like this? for, from thee, is the whole, and, out of thine own hand, have we given unto thee” (I Chron. 29:14). The purpose of giving to Yahweh is presented in verse seventeen; “But I know, O my Elohim, that, thou, art proving the heart, and, with uprightness, wilt thou be pleased.” It is also revealed in Deuteronomy 14:22-23, “Thou shalt, surely tithe, all the increase of thy seed,—which the field bringeth forth year

by year...that thou mayest learn to revere Yahweh thy Elohim, all the days.” The lesson learned is that we are to give joyfully and with a willing heart that which Yahweh has put into our hands according to His directions. Yahweh is our Landlord and we are His tenants. Yahweh’s will is that we financially prosper in order that we may have to give to him who has a need.¹

Is Financial Prosperity Yahweh’s Will for Us?

Abram and Sarai obeyed Yahweh’s calling and He blessed them with financial prosperity. Yahweh said, “That I may make thee into a great nation, And bless thee, and make great thy name, And become thou a blessing” (Gen. 12:2); “Now, Abram, was very rich,—in cattle, in silver, and in gold” (Gen. 13:2). Obedience to Yahweh is the condition required to receive His blessing, a part of which is financial prosperity. The blessing on the nation of Israel is the result of the promise made to Abraham and Sara. Yahweh told the nation of Israel, “...if thou wilt, hearken, unto the voice of Yahweh thy Elohim, to observe to do all his commandments which I am commanding thee, today, then will Yahweh thy Elohim set thee on high, above all the nations of the earth; and all these blessings shall come in upon thee, and reach thee,—because thou dost hearken unto the voice of Yahweh thy Elohim... Yahweh will open unto thee his rich storehouse—the heavens, to give the rain of thy land in its season, and to bless every work of thy hand, so shalt thou lend unto many nations, but, thou, shalt not borrow” (Deu. 28:1-2, 12). Financial prosperity is Yahweh’s promise to those who obey His voice; “And Yahweh thy Elohim will make thee pre-eminent [yathar],² in every work of thy hand—in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, for good,—for Yahweh will again rejoice over thee for good, as he rejoiced over thy fathers: if thou hearken unto the voice of Yahweh thy Elohim, to keep his commandments, and his statutes, which are written in this scroll of the law,—if thou return unto Yahweh thy Elohim, with all thy heart and with all thy soul” (Deu. 30:9-10). This promise of prosperity was to Israel as His servants, how much more for His sons, you and I, if we obey His voice with all our heart and soul.

How to Prosper Financially

Financial prosperity is derived from obeying the commandments of our Father, which entails working, giving, obedience of His words, not being afraid to act on His word and managing our finances. Yahweh has prospered individuals by making them millionaires and even billionaires in order that the money be used to meet the needs of His people. Examples of individuals being prospered are Abraham and Sarah, Jacob, Moses routing the Egyptians, Joshua taking the land of Canaan, David, Solomon, Zacchaeus³ and

¹ Let, the stealer, no more, steal, but rather let him be toiling,—working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have *wherewith* to be giving away to him that hath need; Eph. 4:28

² yathar De 28:11 And Yahweh will cause thee to abound [yathar] in that which is good, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy soil,—upon the soil which Yahweh sware unto thy fathers, to give unto thee:

³ Now behold, *there was* a man named Zacchaeus who was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. Lk. 19:2

Cornelius⁴. David and Barbara Green, the founders of Hobby Lobby, are present day examples of Christ calling individuals to make money for the Body of the Christ. There are individuals in the Body of the Christ who have financial ministries; “For, just as in one body we have many members, yet, all the members, have not the same office, So, we, the many, are one body in Christ, yet, severally, members one of another...in business, not slothful” (Rm. 12:4-6, 11). Slothfulness reaps poverty.

Work is a requirement for financial prosperity; “Yahweh Elohim took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it” (Gen. 2:15, 2:5). Money is an exchange for our labors. Father commands us that, “what ever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men” (Col. 3:23). We are commanded by our Father to work; “If a man will not work, he shall not eat” (II Thess. 3:10). We are also to be diligent in our labors; “Lazy hands make a man poor, but diligent hands bring wealth” (Prov. 10:4). Prosperity (to thrive and flourish) has always been our Father’s desire and plan for mankind. His earth was designed to thrive and flourish for the benefit of His children. In Genesis 1:28 and 9:1 Yahweh said, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it.” Yahweh gave the earth to mankind (Ps. 115:16). Yahweh designed the seed to reproduce in abundance. For example, on a perfect earth, if you put a male and a female horse into a pasture and came back twenty years later you would see hundreds of horses; plant life was designed to behave in the same manner. Yahweh’s creation was designed to prosper His children when it is worked in righteousness, justice and lovingkindness.

Giving is an absolute ingredient of financial prosperity. Yahweh is our example on giving. He gave us the earth, life and His only begotten Son. Sowing is mandatory if you are going to reap; “As to this, however, he that soweth sparingly, sparingly, also shall reap, and, he that soweth with blessings, with blessings, also shall reap: Each one, according as he hath purposed in his heart, not sorrowfully, nor of necessity,—for, a cheerful giver, Yahweh, loveth. Moreover Yahweh is able to cause, every gracious gift, to superabound unto you, in order that, having in every thing, at every time, every kind of sufficiency of your own, ye may be superabounding unto every good work...Now, he that supplieth seed to the sower, and bread for eating, will supply and multiply your seed for sowing, and cause to grow your fruits of righteousness” (II Cor. 9:6-8, 10).

Believing our Father and Lord’s instructions will produce fruit. If we walk in fear and disobedience to our Father’s instructions then our financial prosperity will be hindered if not destroyed. For example the children of Israel could have entered the land of Canaan, a land flowing with milk and honey, after leaving Egypt but they feared the reports of the unbelieving scouts, which resulted in them and their families wandering in the wilderness for forty years. Their unbelief was responsible for their hardship. Their fear to act on Yahweh’s instructions hindered their financial prosperity. Yahweh’s financial prosperity

⁴ But, a certain man in Caesarea, by name Cornelius, a centurion of the band called Italian,— Devout, and fearing Yahweh with all his house, doing many alms unto the people, and supplicating God continually, Acts 9:1-2

given to Israel did not fall out of the sky; they needed to take possession of it and many times by force. Yahweh told the Israelites, “Arise ye, set forward, and cross over the ravine of Arnon, see! I have given into thy hand—Sihon king of Heshbon, the Amorite, and his land, begin—take possession,—and engage in strife with him in battle” (Deu. 2:24). Fearing to take in to possession Yahweh’s gifts will result in a life of lack instead of abundance. Peter was told to throw over the nets for a draught of fish, although disbelieving at first he obeyed Yahshua’s words, which resulted in Peter receiving great financial abundance.

The wise management of money is as important as the production of money. The Book of Proverbs is full of the counsel of Yahweh:

Pr 1:5 A wise man, will hear, and will increase learning, and a discreet man, wise counsels, will acquire,

Pr 6:6 Go to the ant, thou sluggard, observe her ways, and be wise;

Pr 14:16 A wise man, feareth, and avoideth evil, but, a dullard, is haughty and confident.

Pr 21:20 Desirable treasure and oil, are in the home of the wise, but, a man who is a dullard, will destroy it.

What Hinders Financial Prosperity?

What can stop or hinder financial prosperity is: wrong teaching, sin and the adversary to name a few. If the earth was not under the curse, which resulted from sin, nor did it have any evil men and spirits, we would be living in Paradise. If we are to trouble shoot a lack of financial prosperity in our own lives we must direct our attention to correctable problems.

Many religions of the world have taught that poverty, sickness and pain are holy attributes. For example, people in the Philippines will nail themselves to a cross in order to have their prayers heard. Buddhist monks beg for their food and live in poverty. Many Christians believe that whatever happens in their lives is the will of Yahweh. They teach that poverty, sickness and pain will bring us closer to the Creator. These teachings bring attention to the sufferer instead of glorifying our Father. Our Father is an Elohim of love and we are to be imitators of Him. He gives us instructions that imitate His actions. He says, “But, whoso hath this world’s goods, and beholds his brother having need, and shuts up his tender affections from him, how, is, the love of Yahweh, abiding in him (1 Jn 3:17)? Yahweh also has to obey these instructions. According to this scripture, our Father would not withhold from us what we need in our daily lives. Also how can we help other people if we do not have the adequate resources to meet their needs. Material blessings have always been promised to those who obey Yahweh.

A lack of financial prosperity in our lives could be attributed to sin in our lives. Cain killed Abel and the consequence was, “When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crop for you” (Gen. 4:12). When we sin we have an advocate with the Father, who is Yahshua the Anointed One the righteous (I Jn 2:1); “If we are confessing our sins, faithful, is he and, righteous—that he should forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (I Jn, 1:9). Sin and disobedience will hinder life and prosperity. Deuteronomy 8:1 states, “Be careful to follow every command I am giving you today, so that you may live and increase ...” The warning in Deuteronomy 8:19 is, “If you ever forget Yahweh your Elohim and follow other elohims and worship and bow down to them, I testify against you today that you will surely be destroyed.” Another reason we do not thrive is because we sow (give) little; “Do not be deceived: Yahweh cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows” (Gal.6:7, II Cor. 9:6). Being slothful will also reap little fruit (Prov. 6:6,13:4). Another influence on your financial prosperity could be your calling in the Body of the Christ. Some are called as ministers of the Gospel while others are called to prosper financially. The one who called to prosper financially is to make up the lack in the lives of others who are seeking justice, righteousness and lovingkindness (II Cor. 8:13-15).

To Whom do We Give?

In order of importance we first give to our family members who obey Yahweh’s words; second we give to our ministers of the Word of Yahweh who are sowing unto us spiritual things; third we give to our brothers and sisters who are in need who are members of the Body of the Christ and who are attempting to obey our Father’s words. Lastly, we give to the unbeliever who is attempting to do justice, righteousness and lovingkindness.

Yahweh tells us in I Timothy five that if we do not take care of our family members then we are worse than an unbeliever. A widow is to be taken care of by her family and not by the Assembly, unless she has no family and she is over the age of sixty.⁵ Yahweh requires able people to work and if they will not work then they should not be fed. Are we supposed to feed people daily who will not work or who are unbelievers? No! Unless you are otherwise directed by our Lord. Yahshua fed five thousand men for only one day and then refused to feed them any longer (Jn. 6:27). Work is a requirement of Yahweh. The children of Israel were given manna in the wilderness but they had to work for it. They had to gather it before noon, which meant they had to get up early or it melted. If they slept in they did not eat that day.⁶ Widows, orphans and sojourners also worked for their food. They were allowed to gather food left behind in the fields.⁷ The owners of the fields did not plant, harvest, and cook the grain for the poor. We, as well as the poor are to work hard as to the Lord.

⁵ If any, believing woman, hath widows, let her be giving them succour, and not suffer the assembly to be burdened,—that, them who are indeed widows, it may itself succour. I Tim. 5:16

⁶ Exodus 16

⁷ Deu. 24:17-21

The heart of Yahweh concerning our spiritual brother is unveiled in Deuteronomy 15:7-11; “When there cometh to be among you a needy person, any one of thy brethren, within any one of thy gates, in thy land, which Yahweh thy Elohim is giving unto thee, thou shalt not harden thy heart, nor shut thy hand from thy needy brother: but thou shalt, open, thy hand unto him,—and, lend, him, enough to meet the poverty which doth impoverish him. Take thou heed to thyself, lest there be something near thine abandoned heart, saying—Drawing nigh, is the seventh year, the year of release, and so thine eye be, evil, against thy needy brother, and thou give not unto him,—and he cry out against thee, unto Yahweh, and it become in thee, a sin! Thou shalt, give, unto him, and thy heart, shall not be evil, when thou givest unto him,—for, on account of this very thing, will Yahweh thy Elohim bless thee, in all that thou doest, and in all whereunto thou putttest thy hand. For the needy will not cease out of the midst of the land—for this cause, am I commanding thee, saying, Thou shalt, open, thy hand unto thy brother, to thy poor and to thy needy, in thy land” (Deu. 15:7-11). The above verse does not instruct the believer to give but to lend to their spiritual brother with the expectation that they might not get their money back.

Yahweh’s desire for His people who are seeking to do His will is that they do not lack. This was being accomplished with the first century believers; “For there was not so much as anyone, lacking, among them; for, as many as were possessors of lands or houses, selling them, were bringing the prices of the things that were being sold, And laying them at the feet of the Apostles, while on the other hand they were distributing unto each one, in so far as any one had, need” (Acts 4:34-35). This record is similar to Deuteronomy 15:7-11. Yahweh does not will communism for us, where everyone has the same goods regardless of how they worked but He doesn’t want individuals to lack unless they refuse to work. The people of Israel were required to give ten percent of their financial prosperity regardless of whether they were poor or wealthy. The wealthy were not required to give more than ten percent because they made more money as our tax laws are today. Why? Our tax laws break the tenth commandment; “Thou shalt not covet, thy neighbour’s house,—thou shalt not covet, thy neighbour’s wife, nor his servant, nor his handmaid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything which belongeth unto thy neighbour” (Ex. 20:17). Zacchaeus was a wealthy Hebrew. He gave half of his possessions to Hebrews that were poor, which was beyond Yahweh’s law. He was still wealthy after he gave his possessions (Lk. 19). The Body of the Christ are also instructed to give to the other members of Christ’s Body; “For, not that unto others should be relief, and unto you distress *do I speak*, but, by equality, in the present season, your surplus for their deficiency,— In order that their surplus may come to be for your deficiency: that there may come about an equality:— Even as it is written—He that *gathered* the much, had not more than enough, and, he that *gathered* the little, had not less” (II Cor. 8:13-15).

Most of the contributions given to the large Churches or Christian organizations today are used for outreach and building construction. The money is not used for the needy, orphans or widows. It would be asking too much for these organizations to meet the needs in our

local community. Only we can know whether a person, who lives in our community's, financial problem is caused by their slothfulness or lack of discipline or whether a financial hardship came upon them by no fault of their own. We need to have our own money set aside so that we can meet these needs when they occur. We cannot deduct the contribution from our tax return but Yahweh is our sufficiency and not the government.

Ministers are called to serve our Lord, as their vocation. They are not to be concerned with the affairs of this life. Timothy was a prophet of Yahweh and his instructions were, "no one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs—he wants to please his commanding officer" (II Tim 2:4). The Levites were also full time servants of Yahweh; "And I, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of all the firstborn that opens the matrix among the children of Israel: therefore the Levites shall be mine" (Num. 3:12). Yahweh has chosen apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to work full time for the Body of the Christ (Eph. 4:11). Yahweh has different instructions for ministers when it comes to money as seen in I Timothy 6:8.

Those who partake of spiritual food from a minister are required to provide for the minister's needs; "For the scripture saith—A threshing ox, shalt thou not muzzle, and—Worthy, is the workman, of his hire" (I Tim. 5:18). The Levites received the tithe, which was 10%, from the other tribes. The priest also partook of the sacrifices presented at the altar. In the Old Testament the burnt, sin and peace offerings, to name a few, served multi-functions as does giving today. The animals to be sacrificed to Yahweh had to be each individual's best livestock. These animals represented their life's work. To kill your best livestock showed a trust in Yahweh as your sufficiency. We gain spiritually, materially and physically when we obey the Word of Yahweh and give joyfully instead of seeing it as loss, as the world would indicate. After they killed the animal, a portion, if not all, went to the priest and his family. The sacrificed animal was a sweet smelling savor to Yahweh who issued a blessing upon completion, which met the needs of the giver and the priest's household. All this had to be done in faith because giving is contrary to the natural world. In Philippians 4:14-19, Paul, as the minister of our Father, partook of the sacrifice to our Father, which was money, which met his needs. The money given was a sweet smelling savor unto Yahweh as was the Levitical sacrifice. Father promises a blessing, "and my Elohim will meet all your needs..." when this kind of giving is done. As Noah left the ark he built an altar and offered a burnt sacrifice to Yahweh. This was a pleasing aroma unto Yahweh, who then blessed Noah and his sons (Gen. 8:20-9:1).

In some cases, Father will have us store up money as He did with Joseph in Egypt. If Father has informed us through the spirit to store-up a surplus of money, then we obey. Also if we have no one in need at the present, then we can store up our money in a separate money market account for Yahweh's purpose. Do not commingle your funds with Father's funds but open a separate account. You deposit your contribution in Father's account every paycheck and let it build up. The money is ready for you to distribute when Christ directs you, to the orphan, widow or saint who is in need in your local area. Christ

might need a large sum of money for the future and he can have you set it aside for that occasion. Also Christ could be having you set aside the money for your own purpose because of an unforeseen event, which requires a large sum of money, like a hospital bill. Christ, our Head, will lead us. His wisdom, which we do not see at the moment, may in the future be revealed. This was also demonstrated in the account concerning the anointing of Yahshua with oil that could have been sold for much and given to the poor (Matt. 26:9). We give as Christ directs us by the written and spoken word, which is done by revelation. (The spoke word is an idiom for a supernatural communication given to a believer by Yahweh or Christ. The communication does not need to be audible.)

Ministers are to be Unaccusable & Not Fond of Money!

Ministers are not to get entangled with the affairs of this life as is instructed in II Timothy 2:4. Yahshua, John the Immerser and Paul's life style reflected this truth. Great material possessions in a minister's life acquired from the flock could make the flock stumble in their faith. Paul would rather labor with his hands than to receive money from the people he was instructing; "The silver or gold or apparel of no one, did I covet: yourselves, acknowledge that, for my necessities and for those who were with me, hard wrought these hands! In all things, I gave you to understand, that, thus toiling, it behooves to be helping the weak, also to be keeping in mind the words of the Lord Yahshua, that, he himself, said—Happy is it, rather to give than to receive" (Acts 20:33-35)! Paul also said in I Thessalonians 2:9, "For ye remember, brethren, our toil and hardship: night and day, working, so as not to be a burden unto any of you, we proclaimed unto you the glad-message of Yahweh." In II Thessalonians 3:8 Paul says, "Nor, as a free-gift, did eat, bread, from anyone, but, with toil and hardship, night and day, working,—that we might not burden any of you; Not because we have not authority, but that, ourselves, as an ensample, we might hold forth unto you,—to the end ye might be imitating us" (II Thess. 3:8). There are ministers today who are millionaires, not because of the labor of their hands but because of their Church contributors. This is a shame!

I Timothy 6:8, written to ministers of the glad message, states, "if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that." This verse was written to Timothy, a prophet of Yahweh, and not to the Assembly. (Applying the instructions in the books of Timothy to members of the Body of the Christ who are not ministers has caused many errors.) The Assemblies duty is to provide for the minister's needs, if he is meeting their spiritual needs. Chapter six of first Timothy warns Timothy that some individuals become ministers in order to gain personal wealth; "supposing godliness to be, a means of gain" (I Tim. 6:5). Yahweh's ministers are responsible for collecting money that is to be distributed to those who are in need (Acts 4:35, II Cor. 9, I Cor 16). The handling of money can be tempting to the Lord's ministers, as it was to Judas, who used the money for his purpose. Ministers can keep more money from their contributors than they need, which would cause them to "fall into temptation, and a snare, and many foolish and hurtful covetings, the which, sink men into ruin and destruction" (I Tim. 6:9).

Many Christian Ministries have fallen by the way side because they did not heed this warning. Financial accountability is necessary for all ministers of the glad message. A minister's salary should be public information, as is the President of the United States and Congress, and an audited financial statements should be required for their organizations. Some of the organizations that monitor the finances of churches are Ministry Watch and Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability.⁸ These organizations can be found on the Internet. A minister of the glad message cannot be fond of money and he or she must be unaccusable.⁹ The financial affairs of any Christian organization has to be transparent to their contributors!

Should We Give Everything away and follow Christ?

Some Christians have applied scriptures to themselves when these same scriptures were actually written to individuals who's calling is to be an apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor or teacher. An example of incorrect teaching in the Christian Church is the misapplication of the verses in I Timothy 6:3-11 and Mark 10:17.

I Timothy 6:3-11 is written to ministers while I Timothy 6:17-19 is written to the Assembly of Yahweh; "Upon them who are rich in the present age, lay thou charge—not to be high-minded, nor to have set their hope on, riches', uncertainty,—but on Yahweh, who offers us all things richly for enjoying, To be doing good, to be rich in noble works, to be, generous in giving, ready for fellowship,— Treasuring up for themselves a good foundation for the future, that they may lay hold on the life which is life indeed." Rich believers, are not instructed to "...sell, and distribute unto the destitute,—and thou shalt have treasure in heavens; and come! be following me" as was told to the rich young ruler in Luke 18:22, but they are instructed to be generous. Also rich believers are not told that if you have food and clothing, to be content but they are instructed not to trust in the uncertainty of riches.

Apostles, prophets etc. are individuals who are called by Yahshua into a full time ministry. When they are called they must leave everything and follow Him. This calling is their new vocation (Luke 5:11). The man of Decapolis of whom our Lord cast out many demons, wanted to forsake all and follow Yahshua but this was not his calling, instead our Lord said, "Return home and tell how much Yahweh has done for you" (Lk 8:39). Now the rich ruler, in Mark 10:21, was told to, "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and

⁸ <http://ecfa.org/ContentEngine.aspx?PageType=Control&PageName=MemberProfile&MemberID=5152>
http://ministrywatch.com/mw2.1/H_Home.asp

⁹ 1Ti 3:3 Not given to wine, not ready to wound, but considerate, averse to contention, not fond of money

1Ti 3:10 But let, these also, be proved first, then, let them be ministering, being, unaccusable:

Tit 1:6 ¶ If anyone is unaccusable, a husband of, one wife, having children that believe, who are not charged with riotous excess, nor insubordinate;

Tit 1:7 For it is needful that the overseer be—unaccusable, as God's steward, not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, not ready to wound, not seeking gain by base means,

you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” The rich ruler was being called into the full time ministry. The rich ruler was given the same instructions that Peter and the Apostles were given, which was to pack up and sell everything and follow the Lord. If we apply this verse to ourselves and give everything away, we will err, if we have not been called full time into the ministry.

How do We Give?

Money, given in love, is a sacrificial offering unto Father, which is well pleasing in His sight. In the Old Covenant, the amount of money given was determined according to the law of Moses, which was the tithe; “And, as for all the tithe of herd and flock, all that passes under the rod, the tenth, shall be holy unto Yahweh” (Lev. 27:32). In the Assembly of the Body the amount is determined, “according as he hath purposed in his heart, not sorrowfully, nor of necessity,—for, a cheerful giver, Yahweh, loves” (II Cor. 9:7). How do we purpose in our heart to give?

One way we can purpose in our heart to give, is to ask our Father what amount we should give. He has given us the answer in His written word and will also give us any additional information, by way of revelation through the spirit of Yahweh (I Jn. 5:13,14); “Unto us, in fact, hath Yahweh **revealed** through the spirit; for, the spirit, into all things, makes search, yea! the deep things of Yahweh...that we might know the things which, by Yahweh, have been given in favor unto us...**taught** of *the* Spirit, by spiritual words, spiritual things, explaining...the man of the spirit, on the one hand, **examines** all things...**we, have, the mind of Christ**” (I Cor. 2:10-16). The Body of the Christ is under the ministry of the spirit and not the ministry of death... not of letter, but of spirit, for, the letter, killeth, whereas, the spirit, maketh alive (II Cor. 3).

The Spirit (Yahweh) has given us the spirit of Yahweh that we might know what to do under these circumstances. The Old Testament believers had the law as their schoolmaster but we have been given holy spirit (Gal. 3:24). The letter kills, but the spirit gives life (II Cor. 3:6). Father can tell us the amount and to whom to give it by communicating to us supernatural information by way of spirit. The law could never give a one-on-one instruction on giving, but Yahweh by way of the spirit can. He that is spiritual (one with holy spirit) discerns all things. If we are led (guided) by the spirit, we are no longer under the law, which includes the tithe (Gal. 5:18). Some believers yearn for the law and have no confidence in the spirit, but we who walk by the spirit, will walk by faith, which is well pleasing to our Father (Heb. 11). Yahweh will teach us all things in order that we may be well pleasing in His sight (John 14:26). Our giving of money or other items is customized by the desire of our heart, which is influenced by our spirit. If we obey the Written Word and the Spoken Word (spoken by the spirit dwelling within us) then the Body of the Christ’s needs and our needs will be supplied. (For more information on spirit, read the article, “Spirit and Soul.”)

How Much do We Give?

We do not give an amount that would distress us financially, unless we are led by Christ; “For, if the forwardness is set forth, according to what one may have, he is well approved, not according to what one hath not. For, not that unto others should be relief, and unto you distress [thlipsis] *do I speak*, but, by equality, in the present season, your surplus for their deficiency,— In order that their surplus may come to be for your deficiency: that there may come about an equality:— Even as it is written—He that *gathered* the much, had not more than enough, and, he that *gathered* the little, had not less” (II Cor. 8:12-15). Thlipsis, the Greek word translated distress, means “a pressing, pressing together, pressure” and is usually translated, tribulation as in II Corinthians 7:4 and 8:2. Giving ten percent or tithing can cause financial distress to certain individuals. Giving from our surplus is our Father’s will in order that our giving supplies a relief to others but not a tribulation to ourselves. One person’s financial situation requires them to give one percent of their income while to another is able to give fifty percent.

Under certain situations, our Lord can encourage us, by revelation, to give more than we feel that we are able, thereby requiring us to walk by faith. Under the natural eye it would appear that we would be distressing ourselves but the word from Christ instructs us that this will not be the case. The boy who gave Yahshua five barley loaves and two small fish had it multiplied back to him in the amount of twelve baskets full.¹⁰ Elijah promised a supernatural event to a widow woman, who was impoverished because of a drought, if she would give to him all the food that she had; “And she said—By the life of Yahweh, thy Elohim, verily I have not a cake, only a handful of meal in the jar, and a little oil in the cruse,—and lo! I have been gathering a couple of sticks, so I shall go in and make it ready for me and for my son, that we may eat it—and die! And Elijah said unto her—Do not fear, go in—make ready according to thy word,—howbeit, make me thereof a little cake, first, and bring it out to me, and, for thyself and thy son, make ready, afterwards. For, thus, saith Yahweh, Elohim of Israel, The jar of meal, shall not waste, and, the cruse of oil, shall not fail,—until the day that Yahweh giveth rain upon the face of the ground. So she went and made ready, according to the word of Elijah,—and did eat, she, and he, and her house, *certain* days: The jar of meal, did not waste,—and, the cruse of oil, did not fail,—according to the word of Yahweh, which he spake through Elijah” (I Kg. 17:12-16). (We must be careful though because there are false ministers who might say God told him that we were supposed to give a certain amount of money. The widow woman did not have holy spirit but we do, which allows Yahweh and Christ to communicate with us to confirm or reject what a minister might say.) If the revelation is given to give more money than usually, as Elijah spoke by Yahweh to the widow woman, then our sowing will be multiplied back to us to relieve any stress that may have been caused by a larger gift.

¹⁰ Jn. 6:9-13

The Tithe

The tithe function was to “give unto the Levite, unto the sojourner, unto the fatherless and unto the widow, and they shall eat within thy gates [Hebrew cities], and be satisfied” (Deu. 26:12). The Levi’s were 1/12th of the population, which required one tenth of the resources from the other eleven tribes to support them. Christ finished work replaced the Levi’s function, thereby doing away with the tithe. We are not instructed to tithe in the seven Church Epistles but we are instructed to give “each one, according as he hath purposed in his heart, not sorrowfully, nor of necessity,—for, a cheerful giver, Yahweh, loveth” (II Cor. 9:7). The tithe can interfere with our Father’s purpose because it may be too much for some to give and too little for others. Each individual’s trust in our Father varies. Christ, who is our Head, Teacher and Master will work with us individually on how much money we are to give. Peter’s faith gave him the ability to walk on water while others could not rise in their faith to the occasion. Our Father and our Lord will direct our paths on an individual basis, as we ask for the instructions on how much of His money to give and to whom we are to give. As our trust and our fruits grow in Christ, He will prosper us so we can give even greater amounts, which will meet the needs of the Body of the Anointed One, the Christ.

I believe ministers teach their congregation to give ten percent of their income (the tithe) because they do not believe Yahweh will meet their needs. Requiring people to tithe their income illustrates the minister’s lack of faith in Yahweh as Shaddai, the Bountiful, in providing for their needs. The minister works and sows things for our spiritual lives while we make money (carnal things) in order to provide for his or her material life. The less dependent the minister is on the congregation’s money the more faithful he can be to Christ. Money tends to bind the recipient to the distributor’s wishes.

If the minister teaches what Christ wills and the congregation is displeased with this message then the congregation’s money can be withheld from the minister. The minister can then be tempted to adapt his message in order to please the flock instead of the Lord, which results in his income increasing. Yahshua spoke the words of Yahweh, which resulted in him being crucified by his own people. Paul’s congregation turned from him when he said, “This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me... But, the Lord, stood by me, and empowered me, in order that, through me, the proclamation, might be fully made, and, all the nations, might hear” (II Tim. 1:15, 4:17). Paul’s Asian congregation size and their contributions stopped because of his obedience to Christ. Paul looked to Christ for his sufficiency, as all ministers should; he worked with his hands when needed. Paul said, “I, have learned, in whatsoever circumstances I am, to be, independent: I know *what it is* even to be kept low, and I know *what it is* to have more than enough,—in every way, and in all things, have I been let into the secret—both to be well fed, and to be hungering, both to have more than enough, and to be coming short: I have might, for all things, in him that empowereth me” (Phil. 4:12-13).

Yahweh's Warning that comes with Financial Prosperity

Yahweh warned Israel that their heart might become lifted up against Him because of the prosperity that he was going to bless them with; “So then thou shalt eat, and be satisfied,—and bless Yahweh thy Elohim, for the good land which he hath given unto thee. Take heed to thyself, lest thou forget Yahweh thy Elohim,—so as not to keep his commandments, and his regulations and his statutes, which I am commanding thee today; lest thou eat, and be satisfied,—and, goodly houses, thou build, and inhabit; and, thy herd and thy flock, increase, and, silver and gold, increase unto thee,—and, all that thou hast, increase; and so thy heart be lifted up,—and thou forget Yahweh thy Elohim, who brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of servants; who caused thee to journey through the great and terrible desert, of fiery serpents and scorpions, and thirsty wastes, where was no water,—who brought forth for thee water out of the flinty rock; who fed thee with manna in the desert, which thy fathers had not known,—that he might humble thee, and that he might put thee to the proof, to do thee good in thy hereafter, and lest thou shouldest say in thy heart,—Mine own strength and the might of mine own hand, have gotten me this wealth. But thou shalt remember Yahweh thy Elohim, that it was, he, who had been giving thee strength to get wealth,—that so he might establish his covenant which he sware to thy fathers (as at this day). But it shall be, if thou, forget, Yahweh thy Elohim, and go after other elohims, and serve them, and bow thyself down to them, I testify against you, today, that ye shall, perish: like the nations which, Yahweh, is causing to perish from before you, so, shall ye, perish,—because ye would not, hearken, unto the voice of Yahweh your Elohim” (Deu. 8:10-20). (Also see Deuteronomy 31:20, 32:15 and Exodus 23:20-33)

Conclusion

In this present age we live in, this age of spirit, we are no longer under the law. The tithe, circumcision, Sabbath, New Moon and animal sacrifices have been abolished in the seven Church Epistles. We give as we purpose in our hearts; guided by the spirit of Yahweh. Yahweh's world is a prosperous world if we can follow His instructions, which are written in His Word. Your financial prosperity is dependent upon: your diligence in labor, your sowing (giving) in faith, your faith in action (walking by the spirit) and your calling in the Body. (Eph.6:16). Our responsibility in giving is to our relatives and especially to our immediate family if they are following justices, righteousness and lovingkindness. If we do not provide for their needs, then we are worse than an unbeliever (I Tim. 4:8). We are also to provide for those who sow unto us spiritual things; “Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor” (Gal. 6:6).

Let us give our money, which He has given to us, wisely, systematically and faithfully for His purpose. We expect no less from our ministers when it comes to feeding us. Cornelius gave generously to those in need and prayed to Yahweh regularly. Giving regularly is absolutely necessary. Cornelius's prayers and gifts were a memorial offering before

Yahweh (Acts 10). Money can be a memorial offering before our Father and our Lord or it can lead to our downfall; “For, a root of all the vices, is the love of money, which, some, being eager for, have been seduced from the faith, and have pierced, themselves, about with many pangs.” (I Tim. 6:10). Our Father is to be our source of supply and not the acquiring of riches (Matt. 6:33).

Trusting in riches instead of our Father will choke the Word (Matt. 13:22, I Tim. 6:17). Father has given the earth to us in trust. We entered this world with nothing and someday we will leave all our possessions behind us. Our treasures should be stored in the heavens, thereby ensuring that rewards will be given to us in Paradise (Matt. 6:19-21). Money is neither good nor bad. It is not the possession of riches, but a love of them that leads men into temptation. The money we have is not ours but it has been given to us in trust to administer as directed by our Father and our Lord. Money is a small thing with the Creator. Filling up a boat with fish or feeding 15,000 people from a few loaves of bread is an every day event with our Lord. Faithfulness and obedience will release us into the supernatural realm where Yahweh is our sufficiency and money, which is the fruit of our labors, is a sacrifice we place upon His altar daily. As we do so, a sweet smelling savor will ascend unto our Father, which demonstrates our trust in Him as our sole provider.

*“After Yahweh your Elohim, shall ye walk,
And, Him, shall ye revere,
And, His commandments, shall ye observe,
And, unto His voice, shall ye hearken,
And, Him, shall ye serve,
And, unto Him, shall ye cleave”
(Dt. 13:3-4)*