

October 23rd, 2022AM – Pastor Kevin Olivier
Nehemiah 10:32-39 – “Give for the Work of the Ministry”

- A. I am not a fan of preachers riding hobby horses. There is a whole lot of history behind this saying.
1. To ride one’s hobby horse was to frequently or incessantly talk or complain about a topic or issue of excessive interest.
 - a. Every preacher has his interests & even favorite doctrines. Favorite interests need to be reined-in or greatly restricted in preaching.
 - b. The Protestant heritage of preaching through books of the Bible prevents this.
 2. In God’s providence, as we go through God’s Holy & inspired Wd as given to Nehemiah, the Lord Almighty has something to tell us about giving tithes & offerings for work of the church.
- B. All this giving had to do with thanksgiving. These saints were obedient in giving because they were thankful for what God had done for them through Nehemiah as governor & wall-builder.

God calls you to give for the work of ministry.	I. VARIOUS TYPES OF GIVING II. EXPIRED & CONTINUED GIVING III. THE MOTIVATION OF GIVING
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I. VARIOUS TYPES OF GIVING

- A. According to many different verses in today’s text, note the wide variety of what was given:
1. **“Shekels”** or money for **“all the work of the house of our God” (vv32-33)**.
 2. Wood for the altar (**v34**)
 3. The first fruits of the ground & every tree; the firstborn of the herds & flocks & their sons (**vv35-36**).
 - a. That included the first of their dough coming from grain
 - b. Wine & oil
- B. Much of the nature of giving at this time in the OT was because of their agricultural society & its associated economy.
- C. For the young people who may not have a job yet because you are in school, today’s text has a good application for you.
1. When you grasp the gospel & what God has given to you in Christ, I hope you have a desire to give something in return out of gratitude.
 - a. The mentality of some may be to say, I long to give one day when I graduate college & get my 1st job.
 - b. Today’s text tells us that you don’t have to wait that long.
 2. Some of the giving involved service rather than money, grain, fruit, or even cattle.
 - a. There was wood that needed to be gathered, cut, & split for the altar.
 - b. You would delight the deacons if you could ask them if there is something you could help with on the church property.

II. EXPIRED & CONTINUED GIVING

- A. Some of giving mentioned here is no longer required because it was tied to the ceremonial law.
1. We should no longer give wood for an altar because we no longer have burn sacrifices.
 - a. Jesus died on the cross as the final, perfect, sinless lamb of God— the ultimate & final sacrifice for sinners who put their faith in Him.
 - b. After the cross of Christ, to burn an offering on an altar is a blasphemy before God
 2. Giving first fruits of grain, oil, wine, & animals were all for the sacrificial system; this was above the giving of a tithe or 10th of their increase.
 - a. Their firstborn sons which were to be given to God were to be redeemed by giving money according to Scripture¹
 - b. Apart from the wine which was poured out, the rest of these offerings were to be burned. For these reasons, there are no longer any first fruits offerings required.
 - c. Dave Ramsey made a practical application of the first fruits language & how it should guide our giving of tithes to God. He wrote, "... you should give *first*— before you do anything else with your money."²
- B. Even though some areas of giving have expired because the ceremonial law has been fulfilled in Christ, the giving of tithes or a tenth remains. → 2nd ½ of **v37**
1. The word tithe means a 10th. It is a 10th of your increase or earnings. **Malachi 3:8** says that not tithing is to rob God & break the 8th commandment.
 2. I met a minister who believed that pastors were somehow exempt from giving tithes. I don't think he used this text to justify his practice because **v38** says clergy gave a tenth or tithe as well. → **v38**. The Levites had to give a tithe of the tithe.

III. THE MOTIVATION OF GIVING

- A. In **v32**, it says "**We also placed ourselves under obligation to contribute...**"
1. This is part of the people signing an agreement in renewal of their covenant with God.
 2. The motivation of making such an obligation or commitment was God's law.
 - a. Their motivation for keeping up with the wood necessary to burn on the altar was according to the law of God.
 - b. Not just this matter of wood, but all their giving was their desire to do "**as it is written in the law**" as mentioned there in **v34**.
- B. I love the motivation to give at the end of **v39**. They said we gave as a commitment so that "**we will not neglect the house of our God.**"
- C. **Neh 12:44** mentions still yet another beautiful motivation to give. Turn there. → **Neh 12:44**
- D. Turn to **2 Cor 9:6-15** to read how the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write on the best motivations of giving.

Review, further application, & conclusion:

¹ Numbers 18:16.

² <https://www.ramseysolutions.com/budgeting/daves-advice-on-tithing-and-giving>