

An Attempt To Listen To God

The Liberality Of The People

By

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The Liberality of The People

The Tabernacle can be studied prophetically, Christologically, practically, and at least seven other ways. This paper will consider the liberality of those who gave.

One of the many characteristics of God is His liberality. He is the giving God. It is a study in itself to consider the adjectives just to describe God's benevolence, for there is not a stingy iota in God.

| How He gives | Expanded | Reference |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Freely | "How shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" | Rom. 8:32 |
| Abundantly | a) Abundant Life b) Abundant wisdom c) Abundant mercy | Jn. 10:10 Jam. 1:5 1 Pet. 1:3 |
| Liberally | "Ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally." "They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing." | Jam. 1:5 Psa. 34:10 |
| Richly | a) Of His goodness b) Of His grace c) Of His glory d) Of His goodness and forbearance and long-suffering | Rom. 2:4 Eph. 2:7 Eph. 3:16 Rom. 2:4 |
| Love | "His great love wherewith He loved us" | Eph. 2:4 |
| Fully | "Who gave Himself for our sins" | Gal. 1:4 |

In my fifty plus years of taking meetings and ministering the scriptures, I have heard many testimonies, and have at times met and spoken with those who have doubted whether they were saved or not. One of the major series of questions is:

- a) "Did I believe in the right way?"
- b) "Did I believe enough?"
- c) "Was my faith strong enough?"
- d) "Do you think I should do it again and try to be really earnest?"

Let it be abundantly clear, the historical/spiritual redemption of Israel, or the redemption of any individual in any age, is not a business transaction with God. There is a tendency to unconsciously teach that if we give God our faith, then He will save us! Of course that faith must be the right amount, in the right spirit. This makes the receiving of salvation a work or business transaction. Such an idea is foreign to the word of God, for the Holy Spirit makes it clear that:

- a) Salvation is not by works:
 - i) "Not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2:9)
 - ii) "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy." (Titus 3:5)
- b) Salvation is by faith. (Eph. 2:8)
- c) Salvation is a gift:
 - i) "It is the gift of God." (Eph. 2:8)
 - ii) "The gift of God is eternal life." (Rom. 6:23)

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This being so, God does not have salvation as a business in which we give Him our faith and He gives us salvation. Yet when:

- a) Liberated from the “Kingdom of darkness and translated into the kingdom of His dear Son” (Col. 1:13).
- b) In making an individual a “partaker of the divine nature” (2 Pet. 1:4).

Having received the generous gift of God, He expects this characteristic in His people, irrespective of what age they live in. Therefore, when there is consideration of the liberality of the children of Israel in their giving for the Tabernacle, it must be seen against the background of their redemption (Ex. 12-14). When God liberated Israel it was with an outstretched arm (Deut. 26:8), and He brought them “forth from the iron furnace” (Jer. 11:4). For four hundred years they had been slaves, now they were free, and the natural response to one set free from thralldom would be: “If there is anything I can ever do for you just let me know”. But God is going to do more than set them free, He is going to journey with them through the wilderness (Ex. 33:14). He is going to come not just close to them, but gloriously dwell in their midst, and for that He gives them the opportunity to make Him a dwelling place (Ex. 25:8). Of course this would naturally raise some very important questions such as:

- a) What do you give the “Most High God” befitting His glory? (Gen. 14:19)
- b) What do you give the “Possessor of Heaven and earth”? (Gen. 14:19)
- c) What materials should they use to make such a dwelling place?
- d) What sort of structure should it be?
- e) What sort of furnishings would the great God want in His dwelling place? Such a feature is very important for the things which are given prominence in a home indicate those things which are prominent to the individual.

To answer such concerns God tells them that they can show their gratitude by giving to Him certain materials to build His dwelling place (Ex. 25:1-8). He would want a certain material used, namely linen, but some times it would be colored and other times left natural. Only a specific wood was to be used. There had to be gold, silver and brass (copper). He would specify what sort of furnishings there had to be in His dwelling place, and the dimensions. If they did as He instructed them then the dwelling place would be acceptable to Him.

Let us not miss the graciousness of God to deign to accept from them that which He had given them. They were never asked for these materials when in Egypt for at least two reasons. One of which is God had not given them the things. God never asks nor expects from us that which He has not already freely given (2 Cor. 8:12).

Again, this was not a compulsory giving (see endnote) but would only be acceptable by God from those who give “willingly” (Ex. 25:2). It is recorded for us that they gave for the making (building) of the Tabernacle (Ex. 25:8). Later, in the days of Ezra, they would give for the beautifying of the “House of the Lord which is in Jerusalem” (Ezra 7:27).

It was those Israelites:

- a) Whose spirit was willing (Ex. 35:21)
- b) Whose heart was “stirred” (Ex. 35:21, 26; 36:2)
- c) Who were “willing” (Ex. 25:2; Ezra 1:6; 3:5; 7:16)

Another truth is, a priority in their giving was a degree of their evaluation of desiring the presence of God in their midst! Imagine if a certain Israelite, whom we shall call Mr. Hanani, thought it would be nice to have God with them, but not a priority in life. How little he would give! We face the same decisions:

- a) Shall I spend \$300.00 on a new piece of jewelry or give it to a missionary who is in need and the work of God is suffering?
- b) Shall I spend \$300.00 on tickets for a football, hockey, basketball match or give it to a work that is doing a real work for God amongst the needy?
- c) Which is my priority?

God loves us to give willingly but one must first offer themselves willing as Amasiah did (2 Chron. 17:16). How much was done when the people first willingly offered themselves as a corporate unit as Israel did (Jud. 5:2; Neh. 11:2)? Paul, when writing to the Corinthians, spoke of the churches of Macedonia who gave “willingly of

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themselves (2 Cor. 8:3), having first given “their own selves to the Lord” (2 Cor. 8:5). It was not that they had an abundance, for Paul, telling of their background, writes: “How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality” (2 Cor. 8:2).

How great is the tragedy when later in their history they “willingly walked after the commandment” (Hos. 5:11) but it was not the commandment of the Lord. They had willingly walked after the command of Jeroboam to worship the calves he had made (2 Kgs. 10:28-33) thus becoming idolators.

Human nature is self-centered with a prodigal son attitude of “Give me” (Lk. 15:12). Because of this, those who have had nothing, when they suddenly have considerable means oftentimes are reluctant to give up too much! Therefore, there is a measure in which we could understand them holding a considerable amount back. How will they respond to the needs for the building of the dwelling place of God for He does not want that which is begrudged or given half heartily. He gives cheerfully and He wants His people to give cheerfully (2 Cor. 9:7), so how will they give? Barnabas and many of the early saints who had lands or houses sold them and the proceeds were given to those in need (Acts 4:33-37). Not all did that. Ananias and Sapphira kept back some but professed to give all (Acts 5:1-10). Would these ancient people be like Barnabas or Ananias? No doubt there were some who were hesitant about giving too much, and indeed perhaps some who did not give at all, but the work of building the dwelling place of God did not suffer (Ex. 35:20-24). In fact, the people were told to stop bringing for there was sufficient, and too much (Ex. 36:5-6). For those who failed to give or assist in the building of the tabernacle, what a loss was their’s, for they never had another opportunity. How tragic!

The Holy Spirit asks a searching question: “What hast thou that thou didst not receive?” (1 Cor. 4:7). These ancient people gave abundantly and we can understand why. Had any of us been slaves under the tyranny of Egypt and then given liberty, nothing the Lord could have asked of us would have been too much.

Does God Expect His People To Give Today?

- 1) Have we not been redeemed from a worse bondage than Israel? (Col.1:13)
- 2) Have we not been given better (superior) promises? (2 Pet. 1:4)
- 3) Have we not a better (superior) sacrifice? (Heb. 9:23)
- 4) Have we not a better (superior) priest? (Heb. 7:20-28)
- 5) Have we not better (superior) blessings? (Eph. 1:3)
- 6) Have we not a better (superior) inheritance? (Eph. 1:14; Col. 1:12; 1 Pet. 1:4)
- 7) Have we not a better (superior) hope? (Heb. 7:19)
- 8) Have we not been brought into a better testament (superior covenant)? (Heb. 7:22)

It would seem that utter gratitude for the spiritual blessing we have received would result in a heartfelt yearning to give what we can of our material things to the Lord. Such is the teaching of scripture (Rom. 15:27; 1 Cor. 9:11 Gal. 6:6)

Why Should We Give?

When we consider our giving biblically, then it is found to have magnificent results. This means not just putting money in or on the receptacle, but consciously see this as an act of giving to God for His glory (2 Cor. 9:13). Some of the results are:

| Response and results | Reference |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| The bonds of love are strengthened | 2 Cor. 8:4, 8-15, 24 |
| It results in equality | 2 Cor. 8:14; 9:12 |

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| Response and results | Reference |
|--|--|
| It expresses a brotherhood | 1 Jn. 3:17; Acts 11:29 |
| The Lord is well pleased | 2 Cor. 9:7; Heb. 13:16; Phil. 4:18 |
| Relief is brought to needy saints | 2 Cor. 9:12 |
| It stimulates others to like behavior | 2 Cor. 8:1-2 |
| It promotes thanksgiving | 2 Cor. 9:11-14 |
| It increases capacity for further giving | 2 Cor. 9:8-10; Prov. 11:24; Lk. 19:24-26 |
| It produces fruit | Phil. 4:17; 2 Cor. 9:10 |
| Has eternal benefits | Phil. 4:17; Matt. 6:19-20 |

This leads to another consideration in which the question becomes:

Why We Should Give Sacrificially?

a) Because:

- i) He gave sacrificially for us by coming to die for our sins and make us spiritually rich. (2 Cor. 8:9)
- ii) He offers us opportunity to make deposits in the Bank of Heaven. (Lk. 16:9; Matt. 6:20)
- iii) It is a manifestation of how true our evaluations are, and to what is our treasure, and where it is. (Lk. 12:33-34)
- iv) Everything we have belongs to God. Perhaps at times we need to be reminded that it is God who supplies us with all things richly to enjoy (1 Tim. 6:17). David said: “Thine, O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: “for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine” (1 Chron. 29:11). Again: “For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee” (1 Chron. 29:14).
- v) If we withhold that which we can honestly give, how does God view it? For instance, farmer John has a wonderful and very large herd of cows and bulls. He also has a considerable flock. However, when it comes to giving to God, although he could easily afford a bull or cow, he gives a second sheep. How does God view that? God holds back and says: such a one is “robbing God”. (Mal. 3:8)
- vi) As we give, so God will give in the same degree to us. (Lk. 6:38; 2 Cor. 9:6)
- vii) Jesus said: “It is more blessed to give than to receive”. (Acts 20:35)
- viii) After we have given liberally, the Lord promises to supply all our needs. (Phil. 4:18-19)
- ix) Giving is an act of worship to God. (Matt. 26:7-11).
- x) The Lord noticed giving. (Lk. 21:1-4).

Then How Should We Give?

| Characteristically | Reference |
|------------------------|--|
| Sacrificially | 2 Cor. 8:3...Beyond their power 2 Cor. 8:6...Bountifully |
| Willingly | 2 Cor. 8:3...Of their own accord, willingly of themselves, there was no asking the saints to dig deeper, no raffles, or church drives, etc. 1 Cor 8:3...Gave of themselves, willing of themselves |
| Sincerely | 2 Cor. 8:4 . . . “Praying us with much intreaty.” These saints were well aware of the dangers and responsibility of having to travel approximately 1000 miles to deliver the gift. Heavy coins, bad roads, and the possibility of not getting to those for whom it was collected because of bandits. Yet, they left it to the Lord to protect it, and they begged Paul to take it. They depended on God for the protection of that which was His. Ezra declared the same truth. (Ezra 8:22) |
| Spiritually | 2 Cor. 8:5 They first gave themselves The divine example v. 9 |
| Regularly | 1 Cor. 16:2 . . . “Upon the first day of the week” lay aside. |
| Individually | 1 Cor. 16:2 . . . “you” |
| Corporately | 1 Cor. 16:2 . . . “Every one” |
| Proportionately | 1 Cor. 16:2 . . . “As God hath prospered” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What if I would like to give more but cannot? The Lord understands (2 Cor. 8:12). God told the Israelites: “The firstfruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey, and of all the increase of the field”. The clause “of all the increase” means it was to be proportional (2 Chron. 31:5). • The truth of giving the firstfruits of the increase is referred to again in Prov. 3:9. |
| Cheerfully | 2 Cor. 9:7 . . . The word translated “cheerfully” means to give hilariously, laughing to see it go. Because of who it is to and that which it is toward. |

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| Characteristically | Reference |
|-------------------------|--|
| Obligational | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foremost, our families must be looked after. Their needs must be met, and God does not want us to send money to missionaries if our own family is in need of food, clothes, or medical help, etc. “Look after his own house . . . worse than an infidel”. (1 Tim. 5:8; Mk. 7:11-13) • Tradesmen that have done work. (Rom. 13:8) • Paul was cared for by the saints. (Rom. 16:23; 1 Cor. 16:6) • He was assisted by the church when en route. (Acts 15:3) • He reminded the saints of their responsibility to the Lord and to help bring him to his missionary field. (Rom. 15:24; 2 Cor. 1:16) • He was assisted by local churches when far away and not with them. (2 Cor. 1:11; 2 Cor. 11:7-12; Phil. 4:14-19) • He was assisted by individual believers. (1 Cor. 16:17; 2 Tim. 1:16-18) • When Paul wrote to the saints he specifically told them of his expectations of them: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For himself. (Rom. 15:24; 1 Cor. 16:6) - For other individuals. (Rom. 16:2) - For other churches. (1 Cor. 16:1; 2 Cor. 9:5) • He was not behind the door in using a little spiritual pressure, for he was: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Galatians as an example to the Corinthians. (1 Cor. 16:1) - The Corinthians as an example to the Macedonians. (2 Cor. 9:2) - The Corinthians and Macedonians as examples to the Romans. (Rom. 15:26) |
| Liberally | Rom. 12:8; 2 Cor. 8:3; 1 Tim. 6:17-19; Heb. 13:16 |
| Secretly | “Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth” Matt. 6:3 |
| Honestly | The God who owns everything and is holy, does not want, nor be associated with, dirty money. (2 Cor. 8:21; Tit. 3:14; 1 Thess. 4:12; Heb. 13:18) |
| Purposefully | A collection for the saints due to their need. (1 Cor. 16:1) |
| With preparation | “Lay by him in store.” (1 Cor. 16:2) |

It also seems to me that due consideration must be given to the need in the situation, i.e.; the country the recipient lives in; the “known” way they are given; the number of dependents at home; and the cost of living in the country they dwell.

In the New Testament the Holy Spirit uses at least ten different names being called:

- a) Rom. 15:26: “A certain contribution”, Gk. “Koinonia” which means contribution, participation, fellowship. The word is translated “fellowship” (2 Cor. 8:4).

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- b) Rom. 15:27: “Carnal things”, Gk “sakikos” which means that which is temporal, which pertains to the natural. In Heb. 7:16 the same word is used of the law. Within the context of material given the same word is used in 1 Cor. 9:11.
- c) Phil. 4:10: “Your care of me”, Gk “phroneo” which means your concern, thoughts for me, interest in, affection toward. This word is translated, “Ye were” and “careful” in the same verse.
- d) 1 Cor. 16:2: “Gathering”, Gk “logia” which means collection, contribution.
- e) 1 Cor. 16:3: “Bring your liberality”, Gk “chairs”. The word is translated “gift” (2 Cor. 8:4) “grace” (2 Cor. 8:19)
- f) 2 Cor. 8:20: “This abundance”, Gk “hadrotes” which comes from the word “hadros” which means plumpness. This is the only time the word “hadrotes” is used in the New Testament.
- g) 2 Cor. 9:1: “The ministering to the saints”, Gk “diakonia” which means in this context, this service, relief.
- h) 2 Cor. 9:5: “Bounty”, Gk. “eulogia” which in this context means this blessing, consecration benefit, largeness.
- i) 2 Cor. 9:10: “seed”, Gk. “sporos” which means that which is scattered.
- j) Rom. 15:28: “Fruit”, Gk. “karpos” fruit depending on contest, cp. The vine cannot bear fruit, the evidence of that within.

Endnote

In the history of Israel there were those “givings” which were compulsory, the giving of a tenth and the redemption half shekel:

- a) From those who were to be numbered, that is, from twenty years and up. (Ex. 30:12-16)
- b) From these who were numbered. (Ex. 38:26)
- c) Make from a bekah from each individual, that is half a shekel, from 603,550 individuals.

There was also the free will offerings for the Tabernacle (Ex. 25:2; 35:5, 21-29; 36:3) and that which they were to bring was:

- a) Gold, silver, copper, blue, purple, scarlet, linen, wood, rams skins dyed red, badger skins, goats hair, onyx stones, and other specific stones for the breastplate and ephod, oil, and spices. (Ex. 25:3-7; 35:5-9).

God also told specifically how the materials were used:

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| Material | Used for | Reference |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| Silver | <p>The silver was divided into two parts, 100 talents and 1,775 shekels.</p> <p>1) From the 100 talents were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The sockets for the boards, called the sockets of the sanctuary. b) The sockets for the vail. But not the sockets for the Door (Ex. 26:37) c) The total number of sockets were 100 and 100 talents of silver was used for each socket. There were 48 boards with two sockets under each which equals 96 individual sockets. d) 4 sockets for the pillars of the vail <p>2) From the 1,775 shekels were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Hooks for the pillars. b) Overlaid their chapiters. c) Fillets | <p>Ex. 38:27</p> <p>Ex. 38:27</p> <p>Ex. 38:27</p> <p>Ex. 26:32</p> <p>Ex. 38:28</p> <p>Ex. 38:28</p> <p>Ex. 27:10</p> |
| Gold | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The coverings for the boards 2. The altar of incense 3. The ark (wood overlaid with gold) 4. The table 5. The various staves 6. The bars for the boards 7. The pillars for the vail, and their fillets 8. The pillars, chapiters, and fillets for the door 9. The entire mercy seat 10. Candlestick 11. Taches for the linen curtain | <p>Ex. 26:29</p> <p>Ex. 40:5</p> <p>Ex. 25:11</p> <p>Ex. 25:24</p> <p>Ex. 25:28</p> <p>Ex. 26:29</p> <p>Ex. 36:36</p> <p>Ex. 36:38</p> <p>Ex. 25:17</p> <p>Ex. 25:31</p> <p>Ex. 36:13</p> |
| Brass / copper | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The sockets for the door of the Tabernacle 2. The brazen altar 3. The brazen grate 4. All the copper vessels 5. The sockets for the court 6. The sockets for the court gate 7. The pins of the court 8. The pins for the Tabernacle 9. The sockets for the Door. 10. The taches for the goat's hair curtain | <p>Ex. 38:30</p> <p>Ex. 38:30</p> <p>Ex. 38:30</p> <p>Ex. 38:30</p> <p>Ex. 38:31</p> <p>Ex. 38:31</p> <p>Ex. 38:31</p> <p>Ex. 38:20</p> <p>Ex. 36:38</p> <p>Ex. 26:11</p> |

Not all was measured. There are some that the weight is given. The lampstand and its instruments was to be made with a talent of gold (Ex. 25:39). The sockets for the sanctuary and the vail were each a talent of silver (Ex. 38:25). The weighings of God are very serious for we are instructed that:

- a) "The way of the just is uprightness: thou, most upright, dost weigh the path of the just." (Isa 26:7)
- b) "Now let them put away their whoredom, and the carcasses of their kings, far from me, and I will dwell in their midst of them for ever. Thou son of man, shew the house to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities." (Ezek. 43:9-10)

- c) “TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.” (Dan. 5:27)
 - d) “Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity.” (Job 31:6)
 - e) “Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.” (1 Sam. 2:3)
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**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

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