

Exodus 35:4-9

And Moses spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying, "This is the thing which the LORD commanded, saying: 'Take from among you an offering to the LORD. Whoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it as an offering to the LORD: gold, silver, and bronze; blue, purple, and scarlet thread, fine linen, and goats' hair; ram skins dyed red, badger skins, and acacia wood; oil for the light, and spices for the anointing oil and for the sweet incense; onyx stones, and stones to be set in the ephod and in the breastplate.

In today's verses, the Children of Israel had been saved from the bondage that they were in, in Egypt, and God spoke to Moses to let the people know that the tabernacle of meeting was to be made and that those with a willing heart should give for the building of the tabernacle. But before God asks for anything, God gave them a new command, which was a blessing, because God gave them a day off.

† ***Exodus 35:1-2 Then Moses gathered all the congregation of the children of Israel together, and said to them, "These are the words which the LORD has commanded you to do: Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh day shall be a holy day for you, a Sabbath of rest to the LORD. Whoever does any work on it shall be put to death.***

You may be thinking, "Wow, one day off, I don't see that as a blessing." Well, to the Children of Israel it was a blessing, because before this, no one ever took a day off, everyone worked seven days a week, and there were no holidays at this time either. So working 365 days a year, and being told, or commanded to take a day off was huge for them, because they were so used to working everyday simply to survive. Plus it would now cause them to depend upon the Lord to supply for them during that one day off each week, which he did,

† ***Exodus 16:22-23 And so it was, on the sixth day, that they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for each one. And all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. Then he said to them, "This is what the LORD has said: 'Tomorrow is a Sabbath rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD. Bake what you will bake today, and boil what you will boil; and lay up for yourselves all that remains, to be kept until morning.'***

So the Lord gives all the Children of Israel a day off with pay if you think about it "***on the sixth day, that they gathered twice as much bread***" and then the Lord also let them know that a tabernacle of meeting was to be built, and that He wanted them to be a part of it by giving the things needed to build the tabernacle. And when we read that, we do not read of anyone saying, "Oh man, all God wants is my money" No, in fact it was the opposite as we read that:

† **Exodus 35:21-22** *Then everyone came whose heart was stirred, and everyone whose spirit was willing, and they brought the LORD'S offering for the work of the tabernacle of meeting, for all its service, and for the holy garments. They came, both men and women, as many as had a willing heart, and brought earrings and nose rings, rings and necklaces, all jewelry of gold, that is, every man who made an offering of gold to the LORD.*

And they were so thankful and had willing, giving hearts that it got to the point that those doing the work and receiving from the people said:

† **Exodus 36:5** *and they spoke to Moses, saying, "The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work which the LORD commanded us to do."*

Any pastor or anyone in ministry longs to have people who would be like this, willing to give and give so much that they have to tell them to stop, because it's too much. So when we read what the people did, we should stop and check our own hearts wondering, "*How thankful am I and how much am I showing that thankfulness by giving back to the Lord or using what God has blessed me with to be a blessing to others?*"

Now, if you are one who reads that and think, "*All they want is my money, just like the church, all they want is peoples money*" which is the furthest thing from the truth. I never ask for money on my teaching websites or for my music. The church does not ask for money, or very, very rarely do they even talk about money, and they do only when it's part of what they are teaching that week as they go through the bible teaching verses by verse. So it's a matter of you checking your heart if that is your attitude.

Now I know there are some churches that will do anything and everything to try and squeeze as much as they can out of you, and they will have to answer to God for doing this, because God never, ever begs us to give our money. He simply asks, and it's up to each one of us whether we do or not.

I remember one church I went to years ago, when the time for the collecting of the offering came, the pastor would say, "*Give if you want to with a joyful, willing heart, and if not, then go to McDonalds and spend your money there*" Simply he wanted the people to know that the giving had to be from the heart, and if it's not, then don't bother, because the Lord loves a cheerful giver, not a grumpy giver.

† **2 Corinthians 9:7** *So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.*